



# **A HISTORY OF THE MARATHA PEOPLE**



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# A-HISTORY OF THE MARÁTHA PEOPLE

BY

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AND

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RAJA SHIVAJI, FOUNDER OF THE MARATHA EMPIRE  
(A.D. 1627—1680)

**TO THE MARATHA PEOPLE  
THIS WORK IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED**

*Add • and Ichalkaranji, after (senior) in paragraph 4, line 3.*

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE kind reception given to our *History of the Maratha People* has led to the publication of a second edition. It has been decided to issue it in one volume only. At the time that I wrote the History, it was impossible for me to complete it rapidly; so for convenience' sake, it was issued in three volumes, that appeared at intervals. Now that the work is complete, it is better to produce it in a single volume.

Since the appearance of the third volume, my old and greatly valued friend and fellow worker, the late Rao Bahadur D.B. Parasnis, has passed away to the great sorrow of all who knew him. My own grief was profound. For twelve years we had been closely associated in the creation of this work; and during that time our friendship was never clouded for a single instant. He was a man of most exceptional gifts. His knowledge of Indian history was unrivalled. He could write English, as his publications prove, with dignity and force. He wrote Marathi in a style ornate and splendid. He spoke English fluently, although we generally spoke Marathi in the course of our ordinary conversation. His family had for many generations held office under the Maharajas of Satara and he had the exquisite courtesy of a well-born Indian. He was at once an erudite scholar, a courtly gentleman and a perfect friend. His death was a deep loss to learning, but to those who knew him, as I did, his death was an irreparable blow. His patience was inexhaustible, his temper unruffled and his kindly humour unfailing. Happily a memorial of his great work survives, and the Parasnis museum at Satara will long keep alive the memory of one of the most charming of men.

I must again express my obligation to the many persons who have given me their valuable assistance. In an appendix I have given a list of the principal authorities consulted by me. I must, however, specially mention the *Riyasat* of Mr. Sardesai. It is a priceless mine of information; but it is not only to the book that I must acknowledge my indebtedness. Before its publication Mr. Sardesai was always ready to place his proofsheets at my disposal. I need hardly say that such generosity is very rare.

My most grateful thanks are due to the Government of H. H. the Maharaja of Baroda, the Government of Kolhapur, and to the Chiefs of Aundh, Bhor, Miraj (senior) and particularly to the Chief of Sangli for their generous support.

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Lastly, I have to thank Mr. C. N. Seddon, I.C.S., for his translations of Persian letters, a task which his profound knowledge of the Persian language rendered him eminently competent to perform.





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## CHAPTER I

### THE RISE OF THE BHOSLES

A.D. 1600 TO 1637

THE name of the Maratha people dates from very ancient times. As far back as 250 B.C. the great emperor Asoka Maurya recorded in no less than four rock inscriptions, that he had sent missionaries to the Rashtikas or Rashtrikas, who dwelt in the Dandaka forest. The Dandaka forest covered all the watershed of the Bhima river; and here it would seem, we have the most likely origin of the Maratha name. Proud of their independence or for some kindred reason, the Rashtrikas came in later years to call themselves Maharashtrikas and their country became known as Maharashtra.

In the ensuing pages it will be the writer's aim to tell the story of this country. It lies on the western shore of middle India and is in shape a triangle.<sup>1</sup> Its base is the sea from Daman to Karwar. The perpendicular side is formed by an irregular line from beyond Nagpur to Karwar. The area of this tract is over 100,000 square miles and its population exceeds thirty millions. The race that inhabits it varies just as Frenchmen of different provinces vary. But it has distinct characteristics, which differentiate it from other Indian races. The people of Maharashtra as a rule lack the regular features of the northern Indian. Their tempers, too, are usually less under control than those of the dwellers in the Gangetic plain. On the other hand their courage is at least as high as that of any other Indian people, while their exquisitely keen sense of humour, the lofty intelligence of their educated classes, their blunt speech and frank bearing rarely fail to win the love and admiration of those Englishmen whose lot it is to serve among them the Indian Government.

Maharashtra has three distinct divisions. Of these the seaboard below the Sahyadri mountains is known as the Konkan, the tract occupied by the Sahyadris is known as the Mawal, while the wide rolling plains to the east are known as the Desh. Maharashtra receives from the monsoon a rainfall that varies greatly. In many parts of the Konkan 100 inches in a single year are not unusual. In the Sahyadris as many as 400 inches have been recorded. In the eastern parts of the Desh a fall of 20 inches is welcomed with the utmost gratitude. The Konkan is, owing to its low level, hotter than the other two divisions. It is in parts extremely fertile. The Mawal is cool and eminently suitable for Europeans; but except for its rice fields, it is of little value for cultivation. The Desh is barren to the west, but grows richer to the east, where the deep black<sup>2</sup> soil needs

<sup>1</sup> Ranade's *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 20.

only rain to produce crops in abundance. The climate of the Desh, while hotter than that of the Mawal, is still pleasant and salubrious.

On the death of Asoka, the Maurya empire founded by his grandfather Chardragupta crumbled away. The last Maurya king Brihadatta was assassinated by Pushpamitra, the founder of the Sunga line. To the Sungas succeeded in turn Kanwas, Andhras, Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas, Chalukyas again and Yadavas. These last were in 1318 reduced finally by the Afghan emperor Mubarak. Then began for the Maratha people the servitude under Musulman rule, that lasted for three hundred years.

The Delhi dominion, however, did not last long. On the death of Mahomed Tughlak in March A.D. 1351 the country south of the Vindhya broke away from the northern capital; and a new Musulman empire known as the Bahmani, was founded by an adventurer named Ala-ud-din Hasan Ganga. This powerful kingdom became affected in time by the same centrifugal forces, that detached peninsular India from the north. Between 1518 and 1539 the Bahmani territory split into five minor kingdoms, namely those of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Berar, Golconda and Bidar.

In the meantime a new force had entered India from the north. In 1499 the adventurous Babar had with only 12,000 men won the battle of Panipat. His grandson Akbar, a ruler of the highest qualities, aspired to reconquer all those territories, that had at one time or another been apanages of the Delhi crown. He reduced in turn Guzarat, Khandesh, Jaunpur and Bengal. Master of northern India, he began to meditate the conquest of the Deccan. In 1596 Akbar's son Prince Murad annexed Berar and four years later Akbar took by storm Ahmadnagar, which its heroic queen Chand Bibi had heroically defended.

Nevertheless the fall of Ahmadnagar town did not lead to the entire subjection of the kingdom. An Abyssinian named Malik Ambar raised to the throne another descendant of Ahmad Nizam Shah, the founder of the Ahmadnagar dynasty and conferred on him the title of Murtaza Nizam Shah II. As Ahmadnagar could no longer serve as a capital, Malik Ambar made the headquarters of his government at Khadki, or the Rocky Town, built by him under the shadow of the great fortress of Daulatabad. The Emperor Aurangzib in after years changed the name of Khadki to Aurangabad, by which appellation it is known to-day. Somewhat earlier, Prince Selim, the son of Akbar and afterwards the Emperor Jehangir, rebelled against his father. When the rebel had been won back by his father's clemency and patience, Prince Daniyal, Akbar's third son, to whom he had entrusted the government of Ahmadnagar and Khandesh, died of intemperance. These calamities broke the health of the great emperor and on October 5, 1605, Akbar passed away, leaving Prince Selim to succeed him. The new emperor mounted the throne with less difficulty than his successors. Nevertheless his eldest son Khusru rebelled and had to be defeated before Jehangir could feel himself master of upper India (1606).

The six years which had passed between the fall of Ahmadnagar

and the defeat of Khusru had been most usefully spent by Malik Ambar, a man of consummate talents and energy. He introduced a new revenue system which made his government at once rich and popular, and although he retained all the power in his own hands, he yet won the love and esteem of the young king. In A.D. 1610 he believed himself strong enough to attempt the conquest of the entire Ahmadnagar state. From 1610 to 1615 he was almost continuously successful. He retook Ahmadnagar fort and not only recovered all the Ahmadnagar kingdom except one or two districts in the extreme north but also retook a large part of Berar.

The loss of territory and the defeats of his generals led the emperor to appoint his eldest son Shah Jehan<sup>1</sup> to conduct the campaign against Malik Ambar. Shah Jehan had already won great distinction by his reduction of Udaipur and, now in command of a numerous army, he soon inflicted a series of reverses on Malik Ambar and drove him from Ahmadnagar fort. The victorious course of the Moghul armies was then checked by a curious intrigue at Delhi (A.D. 1621). Nur Jehan, the all-powerful empress, had hitherto been a warm friend and supporter of her stepson Shah Jehan. But having married her daughter by her former husband to Prince Shahriyar, the emperor's youngest son, she transferred her support to her son-in-law<sup>2</sup>. She induced Jehangir to recall Shah Jehan from the Deccan and to entrust to him an expedition against Kandahar, recently taken by the Persians. Shah Jehan suspected an intrigue and refused to leave the Deccan until some guarantee of the emperor's good faith was given him. Nur Jehan artfully inflamed her husband's mind against the insubordinate prince, whose fiefs were confiscated and given to Shahriyar. At the same time, several of Shah Jehan's friends were executed as his fellow conspirators. Shah Jehan had now no hope save in rebellion. He withdrew his army from the Deccan and marching towards Agra fought an indecisive action with the royal troops in central India. Failing to obtain the first victory essential to an insurgent, Shah Jehan retreated through Guzarat into Khandesh, from Khandesh to Bengal and from Bengal back into the Deccan. There he threw himself on the mercy of his old foe Malik Ambar. The latter received him with open arms and bade him besiege Burhanpur in Khandesh while Malik Ambar reduced the northern districts of Ahmadnagar. But the new allies could not make head against the imperial forces led by the emperor in person. Shah Jehan implored his father's forgiveness and would no doubt have been readmitted to favour had not the emperor himself been rendered powerless by the conspiracy of one of his nobles Mahabat Khan<sup>3</sup>.

The latter was the son of one Ghor Beg and had risen from a subaltern's post to be the first soldier in the empire. His rise excited the jealousy of Nur Jehan. Learning that the emperor was planning

*Del*

<sup>1</sup> Then known as Prince Kharram

<sup>2</sup> Elphinstone's *History of India*

<sup>3</sup> *Memoirs of Jehangir*, Elliot and East



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his ruin, he skilfully seized, by the aid of a small body of Rajputs devoted to his service, the emperor's person in the very midst of his army. The army, which respected Mahabat Khan as a valiant soldier, made no effort to save the emperor. He was at last rescued by the skill and courage of Nur Jehan. Gathering round her a loyal contingent, she, during a review, attacked and cut to pieces Mahabat Khan's Rajputs. She then released the emperor and restored his authority. Mahabat Khan fled to join Shah Jehan. The latter's fortunes were at their lowest ebb. He had quarrelled with Malik Ambar in order to win back his father's favour, but he was unable to join Jehangir because of Mahabat Khan's conspiracy. He was contemplating a flight to Persia when Mahabat Khan with his remaining adherents reached his camp. Their coming did not at first much advance the prince's fortunes. But in the following year the death of his father from asthma enabled him to use Mahabat Khan's contingent and establish himself firmly on the Delhi throne.

In 1626 Malik Ambar had died, leaving to his son Fateh Khan the regency of Murtaza Nizam Shah's kingdom. The latter, owing to the troubles of Jehangir's reign, effected a favourable peace with the Moghul general, Khan Jehan Lodi.<sup>1</sup> But Fateh Khan's power was soon overthrown by the prince for whom Malik Ambar had created a kingdom. Murtaza Nizam Shah II had reached manhood and resented the authority of one whose abilities were of the commonest order. With the aid of an officer called Tukarrub Khan he ended the regency and imprisoned Fateh Khan. But the prince's abilities were even feebler than those of the fallen regent and he was soon involved in troubles, which lasted until his death. Khan Jehan Lodi, the Moghul commander with whom Fateh Khan had made peace, was a personal foe of Shah Jehan. Shortly after the latter's accession (A.D. 1628) he openly rebelled, and after evading the royal pursuit made his way to Daulatabad. Murtaza Nizam Shah in an evil moment made the fugitive's cause his own and thus brought on himself another Moghul War. Shah Jehan took the field in person, defeated Murtaza Nizam Shah's army in front of Daulatabad, and driving Khan Jehan Lodi out of the Deccan defeated and slew him in central India (1630). The death of Khan Jehan Lodi did not end the troubles of Ahmadnagar. The Moghuls continued their efforts against Murtaza Nizam Shah and the horrors of war were doubled by the accident of a famine. At last Murtaza Nizam Shah in despair turned to his former regent Fateh Khan, and releasing him from prison placed him once more in authority. This act completed the king's ruin. Fateh Khan on reassuming power threw his master into prison. He then put him to death, and placing Murtaza Nizam Shah's infant son Hussein<sup>2</sup> on the throne, declared himself to be once more regent on the child's behalf (1631).

<sup>1</sup> The Muslim historians charge Khan Jehan Lodi with having accepted a bribe. But the condition of the empire justified the treaty.

<sup>2</sup> *Badshah Nama*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 27.





SHAHAJI, FATHER OF SHIVAJI

At this point I must introduce to my readers a Maratha noble named Shahaji Bhosle, famous both for his own merits and as the father of Shivaji, the liberator of the Maratha nation. His family claimed descent from Sajana Sing, the grandson of Lakshman Sing, the ancestor of the house of Udaipur. One of the family, Devrajji by name,<sup>1</sup> after a quarrel with the Rana of Udaipur fled to the Deccan. There he and his descendants assumed the name of Bhosle<sup>2</sup> from the family fief of Bhosavat in Udaipur. Another story is that two brothers, Khelkarnaji or Kheloji and Malkarnaji or Maloji, came together from Udaipur to offer their services as free lances to the king of Ahmadnagar. Khelkarnaji or Kheloji died in battle. Malkarnaji was drowned while bathing in a river. Malkarnaji's son Bahaji purchased the *patilki* or headship of the village of Verul near Daulatabad. Bahaji had two sons, Maloji and Vithoji, who were the real founders of the greatness of the Bhosle family. One evening during the harvest time, Vithoji had gone early and tarried late in his fields. Darkness had fallen, and his elder brother Maloji went to call him. As he went, a black peacock and a *bharadwaja* bird crossed his path from left to right,<sup>4</sup> and, cheered by the happy omens, he entered a deep wood. The night was dark but as he stumbled through the undergrowth, he suddenly saw in front of him the divine figure of Bhavani or Parvati, the consort of Shiva. Maloji was about to faint with fright, but the goddess reassured him. She told him that in his house would be born an incarnation of the god Shiva her husband. He would restore the Hindu faith, drive the Musulmans from the land, and found a kingdom which would endure for twenty-seven generations. The twenty-seventh king would be born blind and would lose his kingdom. She then pointed to an ant-heap and bade him dig in it. He would by doing so unearth a hidden treasure. At first Maloji was loth to obey her command. 'The treasure,' said the youth to himself, 'must belong to some evil spirit. When he finds it gone, he will haunt me, or else our Musulman rulers will hear of my good fortune and rob me of my gold and my life as well.' The goddess bade him fear nothing. 'Go to Shrigonda,' she said, 'and deposit the money with Sheshaji Naik.' The goddess disappeared and Maloji fainted.

In the meantime Vithoji had returned home, and missing Maloji went to look for him and found him in a swoon. Vithoji roused his brother, from whom he learnt what had occurred. They went home and next morning the two brothers went to the ant-heap, dug there, found the treasure and took it to Sheshaji Naik at Shrigonda. To him also had been vouchsafed a vision of Bhavani. She had revealed

<sup>1</sup> In the *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar* his name is given as Kakaji, a name not to be found in the Kolhapur genealogical tree.

<sup>2</sup> Other explanations are that Bhosle is derived from 'Ghoslah' 'a place' (Khafi Khan, p. 235) and 'gharte' a bird's nest. The derivation given by me is to be found in the *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar*.

<sup>3</sup> Maloji was born, according to the Shedgavkar genealogical tree, in A.D. 1552.

<sup>4</sup> These are both fortunate omens.

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herself to him and had bidden him keep faithfully the money entrusted to him by Maloji. With it Maloji built a temple at Verul known as Ghrishneshwar, and a temple and a tank at Shingnapur. In 1577 Maloji and Vitthoji entered the service of a Maratha baron named Jagpatrao or Vanangpal Nimbalkar,<sup>1</sup> the ancestor of the present chief of Phaltan. They rose rapidly to the command of several thousand horse, with which they harried Bijapur territory. One day as they were bathing, they were surprised by a Bijapur force. But with cool daring they rallied their horsemen and routed their opponents. The fame of their success reached the ears of Murtaza Nizam Shah I, then king of Ahmadnagar. He summoned the two brothers, and gave them employment in his army, where they attracted the notice of the leading Maratha noble at the Ahmadnagar court, Lakhoji Jadhavrao. Through his influence Maloji obtained as a bride Dipabai, the sister of Vanangpal Nimbalkar, his former master. For many years the union was not blessed by any children. Maloji built temples, founded temples to the gods, and made pilgrimages to the famous temple of Bhavani at Tuljapur, but to no purpose. He visited the shrine of a Musulman saint named Shah Sharif.<sup>2</sup> Then at last his piety and patience were rewarded. In 1594 Dipabai bore her husband a son, whom in grateful recollection of Shah Sharif they named Shahaji. In 1597 a second son was born whom they called Sharifji.

Connected by marriage with an ancient Maratha house, fortunate in the possession of heaven-sent treasure, and now father of two sons, Maloji had reason to hope that Bhavani's prophecy to him might be fulfilled. He conceived the design of uniting his eldest son Shahaji to the daughter of Lakhoji Jadhavrao, his powerful patron.

The design seemed at first hopeless. Lakhoji Jadhavrao claimed descent from the ancient Yadava kings of Devagiri. He was *deshmukh* of Sindkhed and commanded in the Ahmadnagar service a division of 10,000 horse. In A.D. 1599 fortune favoured the aspiring adventurer. Shahaji was a very fine little boy, sturdy and intellectual above the ordinary. He became the inseparable companion of his father. One day, while still a child,<sup>3</sup> he went with his father to the house of his patron Lakhoji to celebrate the *Holi* festival. Present also was Jijabai, the daughter of Lakhoji, a little girl one year younger than Shahaji. It is usual at the *Holi* festival for guests and hosts to amuse themselves by squirting red-coloured water over each other's clothes and faces. The children mimicked the action of their parents. Lakhoji, his heart softened by the gay scene and attracted

<sup>1</sup> This Vanangpal Nimbalkar had a great reputation for bravery, as may be gathered from the Marathi proverb which is still current 'Rao Vanangpal, bara Vazirancha kal', Rao Vanangpal is a match for twelve vazirs.

<sup>2</sup> *Shedgavkar Bakhar*. Grant Duff says that Shahaji engaged the prayers of Shah Sharif. But both the *Shivdigvijaya* and the *Shedgavkar Bakhars* say that Maloji and his wife prayed at the tomb of the saint. He had long been dead and buried.

<sup>3</sup> Grant Duff writes that Shahaji was then in his fifth year. The *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar* gives his age as nine or ten. According to Maratha authorities Jijabai was born in 1595.

## THE RISE OF THE BHOSLES

by Shahaji's beauty, exclaimed: 'What a fine pair they will make!' Maloji at once drew the attention of the guests to the remark and called upon them to note that Lakhoji had betrothed his daughter Jijabai to Shahaji. Lakhoji appears at first to have been taken aback. But pressed by the other guests, he seems afterwards to have promised Maloji that his son Shahaji should have Jijabai as his bride.<sup>1</sup> The same evening Lakhoji told his wife Mhalsabai what he had done. The proud woman deeply resented the betrothal of her daughter to the son of one whom she remembered as her husband's client. She pressed Lakhoji strongly to break off the marriage. Next day Lakhoji invited Maloji to a dinner-party, making no reference to the engagement of their children. Maloji declined the invitation unless Lakhoji undertook publicly to recognize Shahaji as his future son-in-law. Lakhoji, smarting from Mhalsabai's reproaches, refused to do so. Maloji then left Ahmadnagar on a pilgrimage to Tuljapur, where, prostrate at the feet of Bhavani's image, he implored her divine assistance. The same night he had a dream in which she appeared before him. She promised him her constant help and assured him that he would come by the desire of his heart. Returning to Ahmadnagar, he challenged Jadhavrao to a duel.<sup>2</sup> Murtaza Nizam Shah II heard of the dispute and summoned both to attend his court and explain their conduct. Maloji stated his case, pleading that Jadhavrao had promised his daughter Jijabai to Shahaji, but now refused to keep his word. Lakhoji admitted that he had said something of the sort, but maintained that he had spoken in jest only. Murtaza Nizam Shah II, who liked Maloji and had no wish to drive a gallant soldier to take service elsewhere, pressed the match on Jadhavrao, and, to overcome the objections of his wife, promoted Maloji to the command of 5000 horse, gave him Poona and Supa in fief to support them, and further made him commandant of the fortresses of Shivner and Chakan with the title of Raja.<sup>3</sup> Jadhavrao could no longer withhold his consent and the marriage of Shahaji and Jijabai in 1604 was celebrated with great ceremonial and was honoured by the presence of the king in person. From this time until his death in 1619 Maloji increased in the favour of Malik Ambar.

When he died, his son Shahaji, who had grown up a gallant and capable soldier, succeeded to his estate. The next year Shahaji greatly distinguished himself in the fighting against the Moghuls.

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff insists that Lakhoji never consented then. But both the *Shivdigvijaya* and the *Shedgavkar Bakhars* say that he consented the same evening. I think that he must have done so. Otherwise Maloji would hardly have been able to keep him to his promise.

<sup>2</sup> Duelling, according to Ferishta, was extremely common in the Ahmadnagar kingdom from the time of the first king. The story of Maloji's challenge to Jadhavrao will be found in the *Shivdigvijaya Bakhars*. The *Shedgavkar Bakhars* relates that Maloji attracted the attention of the king by throwing two dead boars into a mosque. There is nothing impossible in this tale either; I have myself known a man place a boulder on a railway track in Kathiawar, and risk derailling a train simply to call attention to a private grievance, namely, that his wife had run away.

<sup>3</sup> Grant Duff, Vol. I, p. 92.

But in spite of his gallantry Malik Ambar was defeated. Lakhaji Jadhavrao and many other highly placed Maratha nobles deserted to Shah Jehan. Shahaji, however, remained faithful to Malik Ambar until the latter's death in 1626, and for three years afterwards continued in the employ of Murtaza Nizam Shah II. He vigorously supported the cause of Khan Jehan Lodi, but when the latter had been defeated and destroyed (1630), Shahaji deemed it prudent to make his submission to the emperor. He was summoned to Shah Jehan's presence, was graciously received and was not only confirmed in his fief of Poona and Supa but was given also some districts which were the private property of the regent Fateh Khan. When the latter in A.D. 1631 murdered his master, he at first set up Murtaza Nizam Shah's infant son Hussein as a pageant king and proclaimed himself regent on his behalf. But finding himself universally detested and his authority precarious, he sent his son Abdul Rasul to the emperor. Fateh Khan, so Abdul Rasul was instructed to say, had acted solely in the interests of Delhi. Murtaza Nizam Shah II had died suddenly and his son Hussein had, pending the emperor's pleasure, been seated on the throne. The emperor received the messenger with condescension. In return for the large present which accompanied Abdul Rasul, Shah Jehan accepted Fateh Khan's submission, confirmed his measures and restored to him the districts which had previously been taken from him and conferred on Shahaji. The latter was incensed at this treatment, and resigning the Moghul service, entered, with the help of Murari Jagdey, then minister, the service of the king of Bijapur.

Bijapur, owing to its southern situation had hitherto managed to escape from the attacks of the Moghuls. Indeed the king Ibrahim Adil Shah II had been an ally of the emperor and had in the lifetime of Malik Ambar agreed to divide with the Moghul what remained of the Ahmadnagar kingdom. Ibrahim died in 1626, his successor was his son Mahomed Adil Shah. The latter, either because he had come under the influence of a certain slave Khavas Khan, or because he feared the immediate vicinity of so powerful a neighbour as the Delhi emperor, sent under his general Randulla Khan an army ostensibly to help the Moghuls, who were then fighting against Murtaza Nizam Shah II. But after making extravagant demands from their general Azim Khan, Randulla Khan, acting on instructions from Bijapur, entered into negotiations with Murtaza Nizam Shah II. Before the plot could mature, Azim Khan heard of it, and making a surprise attack on the Bijapur army severely defeated it. It was his despair at this defeat which prompted Murtaza Nizam Shah II to call Fateh Khan to his aid, with the results that have been already related.

When Shahaji entered the Bijapur service, that kingdom was still at war with the Moghuls. He pressed on Mahomed Adil Shah an immediate attack on Daulatabad. The king agreed and placed Shahaji in command of a large Bijapur force. Fateh Khan in alarm wrote to Mahabat Khan the Moghul General<sup>1</sup> and begged for his

<sup>1</sup> *Badshah Nama*, p. 37.

help. He, in return, undertook to surrender Daulatabad and hold the rest of the kingdom as a vassal of Delhi. Mahabat Khan willingly agreed and sent a picked force under Khan Jaman<sup>1</sup> his son<sup>1</sup> to throw themselves into Daulatabad while he came afterwards with the main army. But quickly as the Moghul cavalry rode, Shahaji and his Bijapur troops rode faster still, and reaching Daulatabad first, succeeded in convincing Fateh Khan that his real interest lay in deserting his Moghul allies and in making common cause with Bijapur. If Fateh Khan resigned all claims to Sholapur and its five and a half districts, Mahomed Adil Shah would let him retain Daulatabad and all that still remained of the Ahmadnagar state. Fateh Khan, attracted by the offer, accepted it. And Shahaji at once threw a garrison and provisions into the fortress. When the Moghul advance guard reached its walls, they were greeted with a salvo of artillery. Mahabat Khan was naturally enraged at the treachery. He attacked Shahaji's troops, drove them away, and getting between them and Daulatabad, regularly invested it. Ever since its construction by Mahomed Tughlak, it had been regarded as impregnable, and Malik Ambar had greatly increased its strength. Nevertheless the imperial army, in which were large bodies of Rajputs, stormed its nine bastions one after the other and at the same time repulsed all Shahaji's efforts to relieve it. At last Fateh Khan, foreseeing the imminent fall of his stronghold, sued for, and was granted, terms. In return for a payment of ten lakhs of rupees he surrendered Daulatabad and the person of Hussein Nizam Shah, the son of Murtaza Nizam Shah II. Both were sent to Delhi. The property of the unhappy Hussein was wholly confiscated and he was imprisoned with Bahadur Shah in Gwahor fort. The traitor Fateh Khan received a grant of land valued at Rs. 20,000 per annum (1633).

Shahaji made one last desperate attempt to retrieve the fortunes of the campaign. When the Moghul general Mahabat Khan withdrew with his spoils and captives, he left a garrison in Daulatabad. The army was no sooner out of sight than Shahaji's troops occupied the besieger's entrenchments and tried to take the fortress by storm. But the commandant, Khan Dauran,<sup>2</sup> was a veteran soldier. He fought several victorious actions against Shahaji and drawing him back, succeeded in sending messengers to Mahabat Khan. The latter at once returned with all speed to Daulatabad, and Shahaji retreated towards Bijapur. He was however not yet at the end of his resources. Somewhere or other he discovered another infant descendant of Ahmad Nizam Shah and, proclaiming him king, declared himself regent during the child's minority. At first he met with some success and with the help of the Bijapur troops defeated the Moghuls at Parenda and drove them out of Ahmadnagar into Khandesh.<sup>3</sup> There Mahabat Khan died of fistula and Shah Jehan resolved once more to take the field in person. So long as Bijapur was not crushed there would be, so the emperor felt, continued

<sup>1</sup> *Badshah-Nama*, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

*Ibid.*, p. 44.



insurrections in the Ahmadnagar provinces. He therefore entered on a campaign against both Shahaji and the Bijapur king with an army of 40,000 men. Of these, 20,000 men<sup>1</sup> under Khan Dauran, the late commandant of Daulatabad, were to attack and overthrow the Bijapur kingdom, 20,000 men under Khan Zaman, the son of Mahabat Khan, were to overwhelm Shahaji and then join forces with Khan Dauran.<sup>2</sup> Shahaji, however, proved too skilful for his opponent. Employing the same tactics for which Shiyaji afterwards became famous, Shahaji evaded pitched battles, but constantly out-marching the imperial troops, inflicted repeated reverses on their rear-guard. At last Shah Jehan ordered Khan Zaman to leave the pursuit of Shahaji and to join Khan Dauran in the attack on Bijapur. Several indecisive engagements followed between the Moghuls and the army of Mahomed Adil Shah. At last both sides, weary of the war, came to terms. On May 6, 1636, Mahomed Adil Shah agreed to abandon Shahaji and to help in his reduction. In return, he received Parenda, Sholapur with its five and a half districts,<sup>3</sup> the Ahmadnagar Konkan as far north as Bassein, the country between the Bhima and the Nira Rivers as far north as Chakan and also the districts of Naldurga, Kalyani and Bedar in the Central Deccan.<sup>4</sup>

Shahaji had now to face both the Moghuls and the Bijapur army. Nevertheless he conducted a most gallant defence. Khan Zaman invested Junnar, the fort wherein Shahaji had made his capital. Shahaji, leaving a garrison there, so harassed the communications of the Moghuls, that had they been unaided they would have had to raise the siege. To Khan Zaman's aid, however, went Randulla Khan with the Bijapur troops. Attacked both from north and south, Shahaji retreated skilfully through the Sahyadris into the Konkan. There doubling on his track, he retired through the same passes and reached the Desh, while his pursuers still sought for him to the west of the Sahyadris. When they learnt of his escape, the combined armies followed him with great expedition and at last brought him to bay at Mahuli near Kalyan in the Konkan. There Khan Zaman and Randulla Khan besieged him. After a prolonged resistance Shahaji asked for terms (October 1636). He was granted them on condition that he surrendered the unfortunate prince for whom he called himself regent and the six fortresses still in his possession. He was then allowed to enter the service of Bijapur and received back from that state the fiefs of Poona and Supa, included by the late treaty within Bijapur. Upon the surrender of Shahaji followed the complete subjugation of Ahmadnagar. Berar had already been ceded by Chand Bibi to Delhi. Bedar had been conquered by Bijapur. There thus remained of the five kingdoms into which the Bahmani empire had broken, only Golconda and Bijapur.

<sup>1</sup> *Badshah Nama*, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> Grant Duff, Vol. I, p. 115.

<sup>3</sup> Sholapur and 5½ districts had been ceded to Bijapur as Chand Bibi's dowry on her marriage to Ah Adil Shah. Malik Ambar retook them in 1624 from Bijapur after his victory of Bhatvadi (*Shivdigvijaya Bakhar*).

<sup>4</sup> For text of treaty, see Appendix.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PANDHARPUR MOVEMENT

A D. 1271 TO 1640

No history of the Maratha people would be complete without a notice, however short, of the great religious movement of Pandharpur, a town on the lower reaches of the Bhima river. The story runs that Pandharpur was founded by one Pundalik. He was the son of a certain Janudev and his wife Satyavati. The parents lived at Pandharpur, which was then a thick forest called Dandirvan. After his marriage, Pundalik began to ill-treat his parents, until to escape their torments they joined a body of pilgrims who were going to Benares.

When Pundalik's wife heard of this, she decided to go also; and she and her husband joined the pilgrims on horseback while the old couple walked. At the end of each day's march, Pundalik forced his parents to groom the two horses. Thus Janudev and Satyavati came bitterly to regret that they had ever gone on a pilgrimage. At last the pilgrims reached the hermitage of a great sage named Kukutswami. There they resolved to spend the night. Soon all, wearied with the march, fell asleep, save only Pundalik. At dawn, as he still lay awake, he saw a company of beautiful women, clad in dirty raiment, enter Kukutswami's hermitage, clean the floor, fetch water and wash the sage's clothes. They then entered Kukutswami's inner room, and after a short interval they came out again in beautifully clean clothes and, passing near Pundalik, vanished.

The following night Pundalik again saw the beautiful women enter the hermitage and act as before. He threw himself at their feet and asked them who they were. They replied that they were the Ganges, the Yamuna and the other sacred rivers of India in which pilgrims were wont to bathe. Their garments were soiled because of the sins of which the pilgrims washed themselves clean. They then turned on Pundalik and told him that because of his treatment of his parents he was the worst sinner of them all. They rated him so soundly that they effected a complete cure. From the most cruel he became the most devoted of sons. He made his wife walk by his side while his parents rode. By his filial conduct, he induced them to give up the pilgrimage and return to Dandirvan. There, no parents were ever better served than Janudev and Satyavati were served by Pundalik and his wife.

One day it fell out that the god Krishna, then King of Dwarka, sat thinking of his early days on the banks of the Yamuna. He remembered his sports with the milkmaids and how they, and especially Radha, had wept when he had left Mathura. He so longed to see Radha again that, although she was dead, he by his divine powers brought her back to sit upon his lap. Just then his queen, the stately Rukhmini, entered the room. Radha should at once have risen to do her honour. She remained seated. Rukhmini in a fury left, and

fleeing to the Deccan, hid herself in the Dandirvan forest. As she did not return to Dwarka, King Krishna went to Mathura, thinking that she had fled thither. From Mathura he went to Gokula. There he once more assumed the form of a child, and round him began to play once more the cows and the herdboys, the calves and the milkmaids. They too joined in the search, and even Mount Govardhan freed itself from its foundations and set forth with the gay company to look for Rukhmini. At last they reached the banks of the Bhima. Krishna left his attendants at a spot outside the Dandirvan forest known as Gopalpura. Wandering alone through the woods, he at last found Rukhmini. The queen's celestial anger yielded to the endearments of the king. Reconciled, they walked together until they came to Pundalik's hermitage. At this time Pundalik was busily engaged in attending to his parent's wants. Although he learnt that Krishna had come to see him, he refused to do god homage until his filial task was done. But he threw a brick outside for his visitor to stand upon. Krishna, pleased with Pundalik's devotion to his parents, overlooked the slight to himself and standing on the brick awaited Pundalik's leisure. When Pundalik was free, he excused himself to the god. The latter replied that, so far from being angry, he was pleased with Pundalik, and he ordered him to worship him as Vithoba, or him who stood upon a brick. A stately fane arose at the scene of the meeting of Krishna and Pundalik (A.D. 1228). In its holiest recess the god Krishna's image stands on the brick thrown to him by Pundalik. Close to his side stands an image of Rukhmini, whose flight was the cause of his visit to Pandharpur.

It was at this sacred place that the poet Dnyandev, the first of a long line of famous saints, took up his abode. According to the poet Mahipati, the world had become so sinful that the gods Brahmadeva and Shiva sought out Vishnu to devise some plan by which to purify it. They decided that all three gods together with Vishnu's queen Laxmi should take human forms. The parents whom they honoured by becoming their children were Vithoba, a Brahman from Apegaon, and his wife Rakhmai, the daughter of a Brahman of Alandi, a small town on the Indrayani river about twelve miles north of Poona. Vithoba and Rakhmai settled at Alandi. But although the union was in other respects happy enough, it was not blessed with children. In a fit of melancholy, caused by the death of his parents, Vithoba went to Benares and became a *sanyasi* or anchorite. This was a sin on his part, for no one who has a childless wife should take *sanyas*. Eventually his preceptor Ramanand happened to go to Alandi and met the unhappy Rakhmai. From her lips he learnt the true facts. He returned to Benares, drove Vithoba out of his hermitage and forced him to live with his wife at Alandi. Rakhmai welcomed him home and their reunion was blessed with the birth of four children—Nivratti, Dnyandev, Sopana and Muktabai, who were respectively the incarnations of Shiva, Vishnu, Brahmadeva and Laxmi.

The return of Vithoba to a married householder's life after he had taken a vow of asceticism deeply offended the Brahmans of Alandi. They outcaste him. And when he wished to have his eldest son

invested with the sacred thread, they refused to perform the ceremony unless he could get the Brahmins of Paithan, a holy place on the Godavari, to give him a letter of purification. Nivratti with his two brothers and his sister went to Paithan. There the Brahmins heard their case and decided that there was only one penance for such a crime as the return of the anchorite to married life. The penitent must prostrate himself before every dog, pig, hare, ass or cow that he met, thinking all the time of god Brahmadeva. Nivratti and his brothers annoyed the Brahmins by receiving the sentence cheerfully. The Brahmins asked Dnyandev what right he had to a name which being interpreted meant 'the god of wisdom'. Just then a buffalo passed, carrying a skin of water. 'Let us call this buffalo Dnyandev,' said the Brahmins, 'he is every bit as wise as the real owner of the name'. Dnyandev replied readily that they were welcome to call it by his name. For in the sight of Krishna men and animals were alike. The Brahmins retorted, 'If the buffalo is your equal and you are really a learned man, let it recite the *Vedas*'. Dnyandev rose and placed his hand on the buffalo's head. Straightway it recited all four *Vedas* without an error.

This miracle, followed by others, convinced the Brahmins of the saintly character of Nivratti and his family. They gave Nivratti a letter of purification and the Brahmins of Alandi had perforce to accept it. Investing Nivratti and his two brothers with the sacred thread, they admitted him into the Brahmin caste. At Alandi Dnyandev wrought many other miracles. At Newasa he wrote the *Dnyaneshwari* or Marathi commentary on the *Bhagwat Gita*, thus disclosing the teaching of Krishna to the humblest of the Maratha people. Besides the *Dnyaneshwari*, Dnyandev wrote the *Imritanubhan* and the *Dnyaneshwar Naman*.

When his life-work was done, he wished to take *samadhi*, or in other words be buried alive at Pandharpur. The poet Namdev has told the story of Dnyandev's end in beautiful and touching verses. One morning when Dnyandev and his brothers and sister were sitting in the temple of Krishna<sup>2</sup> at Pandharpur, he expressed the wish to be buried at the feet of Krishna's image. The god answered that if Dnyandev were buried at Pandharpur, his fame would be overshadowed by Krishna's. He must therefore be buried at Alandi. Dnyandev demurred. But Krishna reassured him that Alandi too was a holy place. Reassured by Krishna, Dnyandev consented to take *samadhi* at Alandi. There amid a rain of heavenly flowers, Dnyandev entered a grave that had been dug for him. A deer-skin was spread for him to sit upon. A wood-fire was lit in a fire-place made for the purpose. Inhaling the wood smoke, Dnyandev became slowly unconscious. While he lay in a stupor, his disciples closed the mouth of the grave and sealed him in his living tomb.

<sup>1</sup> Namdev's *Charitra*, p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> Krishna is always worshipped at Pandharpur under the name Vithoba. But to avoid confusing my English readers, I have retained the name of Krishna.

Not long afterwards, his brother Sopāna imitated, at Saswad, to the east of Poona, Dnyandev's act of self-immolation. Then Muktabai vanished in a lightning flash on the banks of the Tapti. Nivratti, the last left, took *samādhi* at Trimbakeshwar in the Nasik district.

Now Dnyandev was an outcaste Brahman. By his devotion to God he won his way to the caste and in the end became a saint. It therefore followed, so men said, that in the eyes of God, caste must be as nothing and that all earthly disabilities could be overcome by the love and worship of Krishna. Thus Pandharpur came to attract pious men of all castes. The next great saint of Pandharpur was Chokhamela, a *Mhar*. Savata was of the *mali* or gardener caste. Raka and Gora were *kumbhars* or potters. Rohidas was a *chambhar* or leather worker. Narhari was a *sonar* or goldsmith. Kabir was actually a Musulman attracted from the north by the fame of Pandharpur. Namdev, the greatest of all, was a *shimpi* or tailor. They were all men of holy and austere lives. Their worship of Krishna was eminently pure and sane. Their preaching and their poems stimulated men's minds and led them to seek a refuge from their sorrows at Krishna's shrine. The spots where Dnyandev and his brothers and sister died, became centres from which the Pandharpur tents were promulgated from the Bhima to the Tapti and from Alandi to Saswad. Men who made pilgrimages to these shrines were drawn to each other by their common knowledge of the Marathi speech and of the doctrines of the Pandharpur saints. In this way there came into existence the beginning of a national feeling. In course of time the Deccan governments, cut off from the recruiting grounds of Afghanistan and Central Asia, began to employ Maratha clerks, Maratha soldiers and Maratha financiers. The Marathi language came to be the language not only of the Ahmadnagar offices, but of the Ahmadnagar court. But while the Musulman officials dissipated their vigour in vice and riot, the Hindus, owing to the teachings of the saints of Pandharpur, led clean and manly lives. So it came about that the religious movement made ready the path for the national hero who was to free Maharashtra from the foreign yoke. When he appeared, great beyond human anticipation, religion gave to his genius a fervour which he was able to impart to the comrades of his youth and the peasants of his father's villages. Thus inspired, his half-trained levies fought with the valour of Cortez' companions or of Cromwell's cuirassiers.

## CHAPTER III

### SHIVAJI'S BIRTH AND BOYHOOD

A.D. 1627 TO 1645

THE marriage of Shahaji to Jijabai appears, in spite of the differences between Maloji Bhosle and Lakhoji Jadhavrão, to have been for the first few years happy enough. In 1623, Jijabai bore her lord a son, three years after their marriage. He was called Sambhaji and

became a great favourite of his father, just as Shahaji had been of Maloji. On April 10, 1627,<sup>1</sup> after an interval of four years, she bore Shahaji a second son. Several stories are told in support of the general belief that the baby boy was an incarnation of the god Shiva. A charming one is to be found in the *Shedgavkar Bakhar*. During the stormy years that followed the birth of Sambhaji, Shahaji, engaged in the warlike enterprises entrusted to him by Malik Ambar, found no time to pay his wife conjugal attentions. One night he dreamt that he saw a Gosavi or Hindu anchorite, clad in rags and smeared with yellow ashes, stand by his bedside and put a mango in his hand. 'Share the fruit with your wife,' said the anchorite, 'and you will become the father of a son who will be an incarnation of the god Shiva. You must never force him to salute a Musulman and after his twelfth year you must leave him free to act as he pleases.' When Shahaji awoke from his dream, he found a mango in his hand, visited his wife and shared it with her. The offspring of this reunion was the boy Shivaji, born on April 10, 1627. Convinced that the anchorite whom he had seen in his dream was the god Shiva, Shahaji gave the new-born child the name of Shivaji, just as Maloji had called Shahaji after the Musulman saint Shah Sharif. According to another story, Shahaji had a vision of Shiva after Shivaji's birth and was then told by the god that the new-born boy was his own incarnation.<sup>2</sup> When Shivaji was born, his mother Jijabai was living in a house on the top of the Shivner fort close to Junnar. A ruined wall still stands on the site where the house stood and a marble tablet, inserted in it under the orders of the Bombay Government by the late Mr. A. M. T. Jackson, keeps alive the memory of the greatest of Indian kings and of one of the wisest and best of modern Englishmen.

Even Shivaji's early days were not free from peril and adventure. Before his birth, his grandfather Lakhoji Jadhavrao had joined the Moghuls, and Shahaji by refusing to follow his example had incurred his bitter enmity. The quarrel was taken up by the other nobles in the Moghul service. And although Lakhoji Jadhavrao died in 1629, treacherously assassinated at Daulatabad by Murtaza Nizam Shah II, the hatred borne by the Moghuls to Shahaji survived Lakhoji Jadhavrao's death. A certain Mhaladar Khan, originally appointed by Murtaza Nizam Shah II to be governor of Trimbak, deserted to Shah Jehan. Wishing to secure the favour of the emperor, he arrested Shahaji's wife (A.D. 1633). Jijabai succeeded in hiding Shivaji but she herself was confined in the fort of Kondana. During the three years, 1633 to 1636, in which Shahaji defied the Moghuls, they made every effort to find out Shivaji's hiding place, that they might hold him as a hostage for his father. But Jijabai's wit baffled them, and Shivaji remained safe until Shahaji's final surrender. Even then Shivaji could not enjoy his father's protection. In 1630 Shahaji had contracted a second marriage with Tukabai, a girl of the Mohite

<sup>1</sup> *Marathi Itihasanchi Sadhane*, pp. 42-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Sahasad Bakhar*, p. 2.

had to obtain their living. Ordinary persons would have given up the attempt in despair. But Jijabai and Dadoji Kondadev were not ordinary persons. Sooner than share with a younger wife the affections of Shahaji, the proud lady was ready, if need be, to starve. Dadoji Kondadev was a very able man. A Deshasth Brahmin, born in Malhar in the Poona district<sup>1</sup> he had, somehow, in the course of a varied service, acquired a perfect knowledge of revenue administration. This he now applied with signal success to the ruined fief. He attracted cultivators from the hilly tracts and the neighbouring districts by offering them rent-free lands. He kept down the wild beasts by giving huntsmen rewards, probably from his own savings. But when crops once more began to appear on the barren plains, robbers and free lances began to carry off the harvests and enslave the villagers. Dadoji Kondadev met the danger by arming bands of hillmen from the Sahyadris, who with a little training soon made a raid on Poona, a perilous undertaking. His success attracted Shahaji's notice and he added to Dadoji's charge two new estates recently given him by the Bijapur Government. They are now known as the Indapur and Baramati taluks of the Poona collectorate. The Englishman who to-day visits Baramati will see along the banks of the Karha river, as far as the horizon, field after field of gigantic sugarcane. In Shivaji's time no canals carried water to all parts of the taluka. Nevertheless, then as now, the soil was black and rich, and in good years yielded an abundant harvest. Of the resources of his new trust Dadoji made the fullest use. With the surplus revenue he planted mango and other fruit trees. Between Shirwal and Poona, where the mango orchards thrive better than in other places, he founded a village and named it after his master's son. It is known as Shivapur to this day. To great energy, thrift and experience, Dadoji added what was rarer still in those times, namely, perfect honesty. A charming tale has been handed down which illustrates this. One day as Dadoji strolled through one of the shady groves at Shivapur, a large and luscious mango caught his eye. The day was hot; he was tired and thirsty with labour. Unconsciously he stretched out his hand and plucked it. Then he realized too late that he had stolen fruit which belonged to his master. In an agony of remorse he begged his companions to cut off the offending right hand that had made him sin. They very properly refused and bade him think no more of the matter. Nevertheless it still so weighed on his mind that for many months he wore coats without a sleeve for his right arm. 'For,' so he would say, 'if my right arm had had its deserts, it would have been cut off as a punishment.' At last the story reached Shahaji's ears. He, not without difficulty, persuaded his retainer to forget his trifling fault and wear coats like other people.

Shivaji was between ten and eleven years old<sup>2</sup> when he first went to Poona with his mother Jijabai. Unhappily no portrait survives of the great king when he was still a boy. But he had suffered troubles

<sup>1</sup> Ranade, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> *Shivdugvijaya Bahhar*.

early. He had long been separated from his father and to avoid captivity he had lived for years hidden in woods and caves. It is possible, therefore, that, although his cheeks were rounder and his skin smoother, he did not much differ in boyhood from the pictures which still exist of Shivaji in manhood. The brow is wrinkled as if with grave and constant thought. The cheeks are burnt with long exposure to sun and rain and deeply furrowed as if with anxiety and care. But the nose is curved like a falcon's beak. The eyes are large and bold. The thin lips are compressed with inflexible resolution. The whole face speaks eloquently of trouble bravely borne and dangers triumphantly surmounted. Shivaji's body was short but broad and strongly built. And a legend survives that, like those of Arjuna, the epic archer, the fingers of his long sinewy arms reached below his knees. Dadoji Kondadev had the good sense to understand that he owed a duty to his master's son as well as to his master's lands. He collected round Shivaji other boys of his own age. The best known were Tanaji Malusare, a petty baron of Umrathe village in the Konkan, Bajī Phasalkar, the *deshmukh* of the valley of Musé, and Yesaji Kank, a small landholder in the Sahyadris. Dadoji had Shivaji and his companions instructed in all the warlike exercises of the time. He had himself seen a good deal of fighting and no doubt supplemented the teaching of the paid instructors by tales of his own experiences in the field. He also realized that an exact knowledge of the wild lands in the Mawal, of the passes to the Konkan and of the folds in the Sahyadri hills was at least as valuable as skill in martial exercises or an acquaintance with the tactics of the day. Encouraged by Dadoji Kondadev, Shivaji and his companions wandered for days together through the Krishna valley, through the forests on the banks of the Koyna, along the winding course of the Indrayani, or followed the Bhima river to its source upon the shaggy sides of mighty Bhimashankar. But Dadoji Kondadev was not only an efficient land agent and a veteran of Shahaji's wars, he was also, as became a Brahman, a profound scholar. He had built a roomy house for Jijabai and Shivaji, which he named the Raj Mahal, close to the right bank of the Muta, where stretches now the Municipal Garden to the east of the Shanwar Wada. There on winter evenings he would gather round him Shivaji and his friends and expound to them the teachings of Dnyanadev and of the other saints of Pandharpur. When they grew weary of abstruse doctrines, he would take up the Sanskrit scrolls and by the smoky light of a wick soaked in oil, he would first read and then translate to them tales of Bhima the strong, of the archery of Arjuna, of the chivalrous courage of Yudhishtira. Or he would repeat to them the wise sayings of Bhishma, in which are contained the experience and wisdom of two thousand years of Indian war, statesmanship and government.

There were other influences too at work on Shivaji's character. The scenery round Poona is of the most inspiring kind. To the west are the tremendous barrier ranges of the Sahyadris. Only twelve miles to the south stands out the colossal fortress of Sinhgad. To the south-west may be dimly seen the peaks of Rajgad and Torna.



which, when outlined against the setting sun, arouse even to-day emotion in the phlegmatic Englishman. Thirteen miles to the north of Poona lies Alandi, the spot where Dnyandeve entered his living tomb and to which, now, as in Shivaji's time, thousands of pilgrims bearing yellow flags make their way from Pandharpur. But there was yet another influence more powerful than either Dadoji Kondadev's teachings or the grandeur of the landscape. Jijabai, fatherless, deserted by her husband and by her eldest son, found a solace for her grief in Shivaji, the one possession left her. *She lavished on her son all and more than all a mother's love.* At the same time she bade him never forget that he was descended both from the Yadavas of Devagiri and the Ranas of Udaipur. She recited to him the Puranas with their marvellous feats of war and daring. But she wished to see him pious as well as brave. She made him pray constantly at the little village shrine which still may be seen in Poona not far from the site of Jijabai's home. There too she welcomed *kathekaris* or religious preachers to translate and expound to him, better than even Dadoji could do, the various virtues and merits of Krishna. 'Thus grew Etruria strong', and Shivaji at eighteen was a man, tireless, fearless and deeply devout.

It was now time for Shivaji to choose a career. As the son of the former regent of Ahmadnagar, as the grandson of Lakhoji Jadhavrao, as a near kinsman of the ancient house of Phaltn, Shivaji was one of the natural leaders of the Maratha people. There were several courses open to him. Like some of the barons of the time he could live on Shahaji's estate, amuse his leisure with strong drink, fill his zenana with the rustic beauties of the neighbourhood and perform just as little military service as would enable him to retain such fiefs as he might inherit from his father. But to the son of Shahaji and the grandson of Maloji such a life probably never offered much temptation. The second course was that favoured by Dadoji Kondadev. He could go to Bijapur, join the king's service as a subordinate of Shahaji, as Sambhaji had done, and with him rise to a high place among the factious nobles who surrounded Mahomed Adil Shah. But Shivaji was well aware of the weakness of the Bijapur government. He knew that behind the glitter of the court there were waste, mismanagement and incapacity. At Bijapur, just as there had been at Ahmadnagar, there was a constant and furious rivalry between the Deccan and the foreign parties. Either faction, in order to gratify private spite, were prepared to call in the Moghuls and ruin their country. Shivaji realized that sooner or later a house so divided must fall a prey to the disciplined Moghuls, whose forces were led by royal princes who were among the first captains of the time. A third course open to Shivaji was to seek his fortune at Delhi. The son of Shahaji Bhosle would no doubt have received a high post in the Moghul army. There his natural gifts would certainly have won him most honourable distinction. But to adopt this course would have been to desert his country and to stand by while Aurangzib's armies enslaved the Indian peoples and insulted their religion from the Bhima to Rameshwaram. There was yet another course open to the

young noble and that was to attempt the liberation of the Maratha race. It was a well-nigh hopeless task. After three centuries of slavery the wish for freedom was all but dead and lived, if at all, in a few hill tracts in the Mawal and the Konkan. He could expect no aid from other Maratha nobles. All that the Ghorpades, the Mores, the Manes, the Savants and others aspired to was their own advancement at court or the enlargement of their fiefs at the expense of their neighbours. Without resources he must raise an army. He must inspire it by his own words and acts with high ideals. He must fight against his own relatives and countrymen. He must incur charges of treason and charges of unfilial conduct. In the end, he would most likely see his hopes shattered, his friends butchered, and himself condemned to a cruel and a lingering death. Yet this was the course which Shivaji resolved to adopt. He did so, not with the rash presumption of youth, but after deep deliberate thought, after long discussion with the friends of his boyhood, with Dadoji Kondadev and with his mother Jijabai. Having once adopted it he never swerved from it until his work was done. More than 2,500 years before, three immortal goddesses had called on another eastern prince to decide questions very similar to those which now confronted Shivaji. But far other than that of Paris was the judgment of Shahaji's son. He turned aside from the rich promises of Hera and the voluptuous smiles of Aphrodite and without a single backward glance placed the golden fruit in the hands of Pallas, Athena.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE RISE OF SHIVAJI

A.D. 1645 TO 1654

As early as 1643 Shivaji, then only sixteen years old, had begun the work of preparation.<sup>1</sup> In that year he appointed his own nominee as priest in the temple of Rohideshwar near the fort of Rohida in the Mawal, and won over to his side the affections not only of the hillmen of the neighbouring valleys but also of the Bijapur officer Dadaji Deshpande.<sup>2</sup> By the year 1645, Shivaji's conduct led the Bijapur vizier to write a sharp letter to Dadaji Deshpande warning him against associating with Shivaji. This letter caused serious alarm to Dadaji's father Narsu, and Dadaji mentioned this in a letter to Shivaji. The latter in reply disclaimed all disloyalty to Bijapur but announced that the god Shiva, who resided in Rohideshwar, had

<sup>1</sup> As early as 1639 Shivaji had had a seal prepared with the inscription, 'Although the first moon is small, men see that it will grow gradually. This seal befits Shivaji the son of Shahaji.' Rajwade, *Marathi Itihasanchi Sadhane*, Vol. 15, p. 437.

<sup>2</sup> He took an oath to serve Shivaji. Rajwade, *Marathi Itihasanchi Sadhane*, Vol. 15, p. 269.

promised him his help and that with it he would found an independent Hindu monarchy.<sup>1</sup>

It was, however, in the monsoon of 1646 that Shivaji first seriously put his hand to his life work by the seizure of Torna.<sup>2</sup> His choice no doubt fell upon Torna because it lay on the southern frontier of his father's fief. Attack would come probably from that direction. To the north the fief bordered on the Moghul province of Ahmadnagar. The western frontier was guarded by the forests and mountains of the Sahyadri range, through which no army would pass if it could help it. The eastern frontier was no doubt exposed, but to come by an eastern route from Bijapur to Poona was a long way round. The fort of Torna had a commandant and a small garrison. But during the heavy monsoon rains, when no military operation was conducted, it was the custom of the Torna garrison to leave the hill-top and live in the valley. Taking advantage of this circumstance, Shivaji and his three chief companions Yesaji Kank, Tanaji Malusare and Baji Phasalkar, with a following of about a thousand men occupied Torna without bloodshed. There, with the same good fortune that had attended his grandfather Maloji, he found, while digging in the fortification, which had fallen into disrepair, a large hidden treasure. The Torna commandant indignantly reported Shivaji's conduct to the Bijapur government. But Shivaji had already made a counter charge. He complained to the king's ministers that the commandant had without leave deserted his post and that, they had far better entrust the fort to one as vigilant in the king's interest as Shivaji was. He supported his complaint by a distribution among the ministers of part of the Torna treasure. The commandant's report fell upon deaf ears and instead of satisfaction he received a reprimand.<sup>3</sup> When Shivaji offered to pay a larger rent than had ever been previously paid for the lands round Torna, it was added to his father's fief. With the remaining treasure Shivaji bought arms, cannon and ammunition, raised a force of hillmen on the same lines as those upon which Dadoji had raised his guards, and fortified another hill about six miles away from Torna. It was then known as Morbad, but he changed its name to Rajgad or the king's fort, the name by which it is known to-day.

The boldness of this act attracted all the youth of Poona and the neighbourhood. Among those who now ardently embraced Shivaji's cause were Moro Pingle, Annaji Datto, Nijaji Pandit, Raju Somnath, Dattaji Gopinath, Raghunath Pant and Gangaji Mangaji. They were all Brahmans and were most of them sons of clerks appointed by Dadoji to help him in the management of the estate. But Dadoji Kondadev, whose ambition was that Shivaji should rise to distinction in the Bijapur service and who was at once a loyal servant of Shahaji and a loyal subject of Mahomed Adil Shah, protested vigorously. He maintained that he, and not Shivaji, was the manager of the fief, that Shivaji had acted without his sanction. Had Shivaji sent a written request for leave to occupy Morbad, his father's influence

<sup>1</sup> Rajwade, *Marathi Itihasanchi Sadhane*, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 269.

<sup>3</sup> *Khatir Khan*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 257.

would possibly have secured it. As it was, the king would not fail to punish Shahaji and Dadoji as well. But Shivaji had already considered fully his acts. He believed himself the trustee of a divine task. He had his mother's full support. He bore patiently Dadoji's reproaches. But at the same time he directed Moro Pingle to complete as rapidly as possible the fortifications of Rajgad. Dadoji, finding his own protests unavailing, called round him all the old clerks and servants of the fief and bade them address Shivaji. He paid as little attention to them as to Dadoji. At last the old man wrote a formal letter of complaint to Shahaji at Bijapur.

The latter for the last ten years had troubled little or nothing about his first wife and her son. In 1637, the year after he joined the service of Bijapur, he was appointed under Randulla Khan, second in command of an army collected to subdue the south-eastern coast of India. Ever since the battle of Talikota, the Golconda and Bijapur kings had tried to extend their power over the territories of Vijayanagar and reduce the petty chiefs and landholders, who on its destruction had made themselves independent. But the wars with Ahmadnagar had diverted the attention of Bijapur, and the kingdom of Golconda had so far profited most by the fall of Ramraj. In 1637 Bijapur, freed by the destruction of its ancient rival, resolved to conquer as much as it could of southern India. Shahaji and Randulla Khan spent the year 1637 in overcoming the resistance of a powerful chief named Kemp Gauda, whose capital was Bengrul or Bangalore. At the close of the year Randulla Khan was recalled and Shahaji succeeded to the supreme command. The capacity of the veteran general soon made itself felt and the Bijapur army overran Kolar, Dood, Balapur and Sirai. These districts were conferred on Shahaji as military fiefs. After he had conquered the whole plateau round Bangalore, he descended the Eastern Ghats to subdue the ancient country of the Cholas.

As already related the invasion of Malik Kafir overthrew all the dynasties of southern India. From this invasion Tanjore never recovered. The rise of Vijayanagar was more fatal to it even than the assaults of Malik Kafir. It lingered on, however, in name until A.D. 1530. At that time the prince of Tanjore, Vir Shekhar, was the deadly enemy of Chandra Shekhar, the prince of Madura. After various turns of fortune Vir Shekhar overthrew his foe and took Madura. Chandra Shekhar, to recover it, called to his help Krishna Raya, the king of Vijayanagar. The result was the usual one in such cases. The Vijayanagar army overthrew Vir Shekhar. The king annexed Tanjore and gave it in fief to one Shivappa Naik, one of the royal princes. Chandra Shekhar was for some time allowed to reign in Madura as a puppet king. But before his death Madura had become the fief of a certain Vishvanath Naik, a general of Vijayanagar. After Talikota, Tanjore and Madura again became independent principalities. In Shahaji's time Raghunath Naik was chief of Tanjore. He passed his time in fighting with Vyankat Naik, the lord of the great fortress of Jinji, and Trimal Naik, who owned the large town of Trichinopoly to the south of the Coleroon River, the name

given<sup>6</sup> to the Caveri before it reaches the sea Shahaji, taking advantage of their quarrel, reduced all three disputants to a common obedience to the Bijapur government.

Shahaji, busy in the work of conquest and administration, paid little attention to Dadoji Kondadev's complaint and does not appear to have answered his letter. But the Bijapur government now began to look askance at Shivaji's conduct and called on Shahaji for an explanation of it. Shahaji even then did not treat the matter seriously. He wrote a soothing reply to Bijapur and sent a letter to Shivaji in which he suggested that he had better not fortify Rajgad. The evident indifference of Shahaji, the obstinacy of Shivaji, and the fears which Dadoji felt for the future of both, preyed on his mind. He fell ill. Shivaji, greatly attached to him, nursed him with filial devotion. He sent for the best available doctors to treat him. But care undid the work of their medicines. In a few weeks the old man reached the threshold of death (A.D. 1677). He sent for Shivaji and told him that his remonstrances had all been in what he had thought to be Shivaji's interest. He then summoned his principal subordinates. In their presence he handed over the keys of the treasury to Shivaji and bade them regard him as their master. Having thus indirectly given his approval to Shivaji's acts, he commended his family to the young man's care and shortly afterwards breathed his last.<sup>1</sup> Dadoji's dying words made a deep impression on those who were present to hear them. But two of his chief subordinates were absent. These were Phirangoji Narsala, the commandant of Chakan, a fortified town to the north of Poona, and Sambhaji Mohite, the brother of Tukabai Mohite, Shahaji's second wife, and commandant of Supa, a similar town to the south-east of Poona. Phirangoji Narsala, on hearing that Dadoji Kondadev had resigned his trust into Shivaji's hands, agreed readily to do the same. Shivaji confirmed Phirangoji Narsala in his post and increased his charge by adding to it some of the villages in the neighbourhood. Sambhaji Mohite, however, was proof against all persuasions. When Shahaji and Jijabai quarrelled on Tukabai's account, Sambhaji Mohite took his sister's side and bore no friendly feelings to Jijabai's son. He informed Shivaji politely that the trust conferred on Dadoji Kondadev lapsed on the latter's death to the trustor. He (Sambhaji Mohite) must therefore await Shahaji's orders before he could acknowledge Shivaji as his superior. Argument was useless, so Shivaji used force. With 300 picked men he made a sudden night march to Supa, surprised Sambhaji Mohite in his bed, took his guards prisoners and after enlisting in his own service those who were willing, sent the rest together with Sambhaji Mohite to Bangalore, the headquarters of Shahaji's government. As it did not occur to the officers in charge of Indapur and Baramati to dispute Shivaji's authority, Shivaji had now acquired complete control

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff, (Vol. I, p. 133), writes that Dadoji advised Shivaji to prosecute his plans of independence, to protect Brahmins, cows and cultivators, to preserve the temples of the Hindus from violation and to follow the fortune which lay before him. But there is nothing so direct as this in the *Chitnis Bakhar*. Ranade (p. 66), merely states, 'The old man yielded and blessed Shivaji before he died.'

of his father's Poona estates. He was, therefore, at liberty to resume his former scheme and protect himself against attack from the Bijapur government. He had already, by the occupation of Torna and Rajgad, secured his south-western frontier. But twelve miles immediately south of Poona was the great fortress of Kondana. Whoever held it dominated not only the Muta valley but the Poona plain as far as Chakan. It was in charge of a Musulman commandant whose name has not survived. For a sum of money he consented to surrender it, and Shivaji after entering it changed its name to Sinhgad or 'the lion's fort'.

To the south-east of Sinhgad was, if possible, a still more stupendous natural stronghold. Its name was Purandar, another name for the god Indra, and it overlooked the plateau above the Sinhgad hills, in which lies Saswad, the burial place of Sopana. If it could be taken, the whole of Shivaji's southern frontier would be safe. The Bijapur government had entrusted Purandar to a Brahman called Nilkanth Naik.<sup>1</sup> All that is recorded of him is that he had an ungovernable temper. On one occasion his wife objected to his conduct. He had her promptly blown from the mouth of a cannon. In youth he had been a great friend of Shahaji and his sons knew Shivaji well. The fiery old commandant died about the same time as Dadoji Kondadev, and the eldest son Pilo, without orders from Bijapur, not only assumed command of the fort, but usurped all the lands and revenues allotted to the commandant. The younger brothers claimed that they, as sons of the same father, had equal rights with Pilo. Whether the plea was good law in the case of a military fief may be doubted. But in any case they were entitled to a hearing, and as the Bijapur government was too slothful to grant them one, they appealed to Shivaji. What happened afterwards has been variously related. According to one authority,<sup>2</sup> the garrison sent Shivaji a message advising him to seize the place himself and so end the quarrel. According to a second authority,<sup>3</sup> the brothers called in Shivaji as an arbitrator. He, under pretence of examining the property in dispute, seized it. According to a third authority,<sup>4</sup> Shivaji, hearing of their differences, gave out that he was going to attack the Nimbalkars of Phaltan. As he went he halted at Saswad some six miles from Purandar. It was *Drwali*, or the feast of lamps, and Pilo and his two brothers begged him to join them in the festival. He accepted the invitation and took part in the merry-making. Next day he proposed that he and his hosts should bathe in the stream which flows through Saswad. The brothers agreed and the young men spent the morning bathing. When they returned to Purandar, Shivaji's ensign flew from the battlements. His soldiers, in the absence of the brothers, and with the connivance of the garrison, had seized the fortress. But whatever the true story may be, we need waste no pity on the brothers. The fortress, as such, was worthless to them. They prized it merely for the salary which the commandant drew. After

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar*; see also Ranade, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> *Shedgavkar Bakhar*.

<sup>3</sup> Ranade, p. 91.

<sup>4</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar*.

its capture Shivaji offered them, and they accepted, compensation elsewhere of greater value. To Pilo Nilkanth he gave a wide tract of land below the fort and round Purandar village and had a house built there for him. Shankarraoji Nilkanth, the second brother, Shivaji made superintendent of his artillery, elephants and camels. The youngest brother also entered Shivaji's service. Moro Pingle, whose skill in fortification had recently been shown at Torna and Rajgad, was appointed governor of Purandar.

Shivaji's southern frontier was now safe. But he had exhausted the Torna treasure and the revenues of his father's fief. It was therefore absolutely necessary for him to obtain money. Shortly after the capture of Purandar, chance enabled him to supply this need. In the centre of one of the most fertile tracts of the Thana collectorate is the rich town of Kalyan. It was then the capital of a province entrusted to the care of a Musulman named Mulaja Ahmad. Completely ignorant of Shivaji's designs, he had collected the government rents of his charge and had sent the money to Bijapur. With it went an escort large enough to guard it against an attack by a band of hill robbers. As the carts with their escort were winding their way through the Konkan, Shivaji, with a body of 300 horse, part of the former garrison of Supa, descended the Bhor pass west of Poona and surprised them. The guards could make no effective resistance and Shivaji made himself master of the treasure. Such an act meant, of course, open war with Bijapur. So Shivaji followed it up by a surprise attack on the neighbouring forts.<sup>1</sup> He took no less than nine. Of these the most important were Lohgad, Rajmachi and Rairi. Rajmachi is a stupendous hill at the foot of the Bhor pass. Rairi, which afterwards became Shivaji's capital, will be described in a later page. Lohgad stands above the Bhor pass and, with its twin fortress Visapur,<sup>2</sup> is a familiar object to travellers from Poona to Bombay. Strange legends are still told of this ancient fort. The best-known is the following. In early days, before the Bahmani kingdom had arisen and before Islam had become the state religion, six Musulman saints came to convert the Deccan. One of these was named Umar Khan, and his mission led him into the Indrayani valley. There, however, the fame of a Hindu anchorite who lived on the top of Lohgad hampered his missionary efforts. The Musulman resolved to remove his Hindu rival. He rode up the path until he reached a spot where the paths to Lohgad and Visapur bifurcate. He then alighted, and roaring a warning to the anchorite to depart, enforced his words by a violent blow of his spear against the hill side. Driven by the saint's muscular arm, the spear passed through the edge of the cliff, leaving a gigantic window or flying buttress against its side. The anchorite, however, paid no attention. Umar Khan then climbed Lohgad, and on its summit found his enemy absorbed in beatific contemplation. Still louder Umar Khan bade him begone. Again

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff gives the names of the forts as Kangooree, Toong, Tikona Bhoorup, Koaree, Lohgad and Rajmachi.

<sup>2</sup> Visapur was not fortified until the time of Balaji Vishvânath.

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the anchorite heeded him not. Umar Khan, exasperated, seized him by the leg and with superhuman force hurled him over the half mile which separates Lohgad from Visapur. Even then the anchorite did not fall to earth, but borne on by the prodigious power of Umar Khan's right arm, he fell at last in the very centre of the Visapur plateau. There a small temple was erected over his body by his Hindu followers. At the foot of Lohgad a number of clay horses mark where the Musulman saint alighted. Both temple and horses may still be seen by the curious.

While Shivaji took the forts, Abaji Sondev, one of Shahaji's old clerks, now a trusted officer of the young adventurer, rode with a body of horse to Kalyan, entered it without resistance, and made prisoner Mulana Ahmad. Shivaji, delighted with this success, followed Abaji to Kalyan, treated the captive governor with the utmost respect and sent him back honourably to Bijapur. Before he arrived there the news of Shivaji's conduct had reached the city. The king was naturally incensed at the rebellion of one whose father had risen high in the Bijapur service. A royal letter<sup>1</sup> was despatched to Shivaji censuring his conduct and ordering him to Bijapur. The king also directed Shahaji to use his influence with his son. To the former letter Shivaji replied curtly that he would go to Bijapur provided that all the territory in his possession should be conferred on him in fief. To his father Shivaji replied that he was no longer a child, but a man and master of his own destiny. He had now become an independent chief and regarded as his own both Shahaji's Poona estates and his recent conquests from Bijapur.

The king naturally refused to accept Shivaji's proposals. They were impossible in themselves, and Shivaji's letter to his father showed that he did not expect their acceptance. Mahomed Adil Shah, instead of acting on Shahaji's advice and sending a force at once to overthrow the rebel, conceived the idea that Shivaji was really acting under his father's orders. This idea was fostered by the Musulmans at court, jealous of the position which Shahaji had reached by his industry and talents. The king resolved to seize Shahaji's person. It was, however, necessary to proceed cautiously. An unsuccessful attempt would merely drive him into open rebellion. In the royal service was an ambitious Maratha noble, called Baji Ghorpade. The family had once been known as Bhosle and were probably connected, although remotely, with that of Shahaji. They had later taken the name of Ghorpade after an ancestor who had first used the ghorpad or large lizard for the capture of forts. He had observed that the animal could not only climb a perpendicular rock, but could cling to it, even if pulled with great violence. The Maratha, acting on his observation, trained a ghorpad to run up a wall in a given direction. Its training complete, he fastened a rope ladder to its tail and made it run up the wall of a fort which he wished to escalate. When the ghorpad had reached the summit, a small boy was sent up the ladder. The ghorpad, feeling the strain, dug its claws firmly into the earth.

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdurgvijaya Bakhar.*



When the boy reached the top, he released the *ghorpad* and fastened the rope ladder to the ground with iron pegs. By means of a ladder, the storming party reached the top and overpowered the garrison. This device was afterwards used extensively by both the Ahmadnagar and Bijapur governments. The king had recently conferred the fief of Mudhol on Bajji Ghorpade and he was now expected to show that he had deserved his promotion. He was told treacherously to seize Shahaji's person and hand him over as prisoner to the king. A few days later, Bajji Ghorpade visited Shahaji and begged him to be present at a dinner-party given in his honour. Shahaji accepted the invitation and came on the appointed day. When Shahaji reached the outer door Ghorpade's servants bade him doff his sword and shield and dismiss his attendants. Shahaji, possibly suspecting danger, refused to do so. Ghorpade then offered courteously to show his guest over the house. Shahaji followed him until they reached the most distant part of it. Suddenly Ghorpade shut and bolted a door behind him, thus separating Shahaji's attendants from their master. At the same time a body of Ghorpade's men hidden in the back of the house rushed on Shahaji and took him prisoner. He was put in chains and sent to Mahomed Adil Shah.

In the royal presence the unfortunate noble vainly protested his innocence. The king refused to believe him and ordered him to be bricked up in a wall. Masons were sent for. A niche large enough to admit a man was made. Into it Shahaji was placed and in front of him the masons began to build a fresh wall. As each layer added to its height the king shouted at his victim, "Confess your guilt and save your life!" At last the layers of bricks reached as high as Shahaji's chin, leaving only his face visible. As Shahaji still asserted that his son Shivaji had acted entirely without his authority, the king stopped the masons and left Shahaji as he was. But he told him to write to his son and threatened, in case Shivaji did not soon come to Bijapur, to close the small aperture that still remained. On receiving his father's letter Shivaji was in a cruel dilemma. If he went to Bijapur, he would almost certainly be executed. If he did not, his father would die in his place. A third course was, so it is said, suggested to him by his wife Saibai. He sent one of Ahadoji's old clerks, Raghunath Pant, to Delhi to invoke the aid of Shah Jehan. That emperor had no love for Shahaji, who had so long defied his efforts to conquer Ahmadnagar. But the chance of picking a quarrel with Bijapur and above all of annexing that part of Ahmadnagar which had been resigned to Bijapur by the recent treaty, was too good to be lost. The emperor sent direct to Shahaji a letter dated November 30, 1649. In it he wrote that he overlooked the past and that he had sent word to his ambassadors to secure Shahaji's release and that he accepted him as a noble of the Delhi empire. He also conferred a dress of honour on Shahaji and gave a command in the imperial service to Sambhaji. The arrival of the letter at Bijapur must have caused Mahomed Adil Shah some hours of anxious thought.



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The position now between Shivaji and the Bijapur government was one of stalemate. If Shivaji committed further aggressions, they would certainly kill Shahaji. If Mahomed Adil Shah harmed Shahaji, Shivaji would call in Moghul aid. In the circumstances neither party wished to begin overt hostilities. But the Bijapur government made a secret attempt to capture their enemy.<sup>2</sup> Among the latter's conquests was the town of Mahad in the Konkan about fifty miles as the crow flies to the south-west of Poona. It is now the headquarters of a taluka in the Ratnagiri district. It was even then an important place and Shivaji used often to visit it. This was known to the Bijapur government, and one Baji Shamraj was ordered to surprise him there and take him dead or alive. As the country immediately to the east of Mahad was a fief of a certain Chandra Rao More, Raja of Jaoli, he was made privy to the plot and he agreed to let Baji Shamraj conceal himself within his estates.

Chandra Rao More was one of the most important Hindu nobles under the Bijapur government. His chief town Jaoli, now a petty village, lay in the valley of the Koyna river, immediately below Mahabaleshwar, to-day the summer capital of the Bombay Government. That plateau, which extends from the head of the Krishna valley to Panchagni, a distance of nearly twenty miles, is now interested in every direction by broad red roads and by shady riding paths that lead the visitor to points and clearings, from which can be seen views of unimagined splendour. In the summer months the chief officers of the Executive Government and hundreds of visitors from all parts of the Presidency come by motor-car or carriage to enjoy the cool breezes that blow amid scenes which no other spot in the Bombay Presidency can rival. In May and early June when the fierce heat of the plains can hardly be borne by Europeans, the days in Mahabaleshwar are pleasant and the evenings chilly. In the morning heavy mists obscure the sun, ward off its rays and lie like coverlets of down upon the sleeping mountains. In the time of Shivaji the plateau was a trackless jungle known as the Nahar Forest. Its one inhabited spot was a village now called Old Mahabaleshwar. It lies on a narrow neck of

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Grant Duff, Vol. I, p. 145. See also Ranade.

land where five rivers are supposed to rise. The chief of these is the Krishna, which after a course of many hundreds of miles throws itself at length into the Bay of Bengal. Next to it in importance is the Venna or Yenna, a beautiful stream which, dammed up in the centre of the plateau, makes the Mahableshwar lake. The banks of the lake are covered with vegetable gardens and strawberry beds. From its south-eastern end the river issues again and a mile or two further on falls suddenly, at Lingamala, 1,000 feet into the plain below, thus forming, especially after the monsoon rains, a waterfall of extraordinary beauty. The third is the Koyna river, the banks of which are still covered with dense forest and give shelter to *sambur* and wild dog, panther and tiger. The Yenna joins the Krishna at Mahul near Satara. The Koyna joins it at Karad. The Krishna, the Yenna and the Koyna flow eastward. The remaining two, the Gayatri and the Savitri, flow westward and mingle their waters with the Arabian Sea. According to local belief a sixth river may from time to time be seen by devout Hindu pilgrims. When every twelfth year the planet Jupiter enters the sign of Virgo, the stately Ganges pays to her lowlier sisters a visit and for twelve months flows by their side in Old Mahableshwar. The sources of rivers are sacred in India as in many ancient countries, and Mahableshwar, the source of no less than five, has been sacred from remote times. Amongst the earliest known pilgrims was Singhana, one of the greatest of the Yadava kings. In 1215 he built at the sources of the Krishna a small temple and dug a pond in honour of the god Shiva, who here is worshipped under the title of Maha-Bal-Ishwar, or god the mightiest.

The Yadava kings gave the Mahableshwar plateau and neighbouring valleys to the Shirkes, the family renowned by the defeat of Malik-ul-Tajir near Vishalgad. After their conquest by the Bahmani kings, the Shirkes held Mahableshwar as vassals. With the downfall of the Bahmani kingdom the Shirkes fell also. Yusuf Adil Shah, the founder of the Bijapur kingdom, offered the Shirkes' fief to Parsoji Bajirao More, one of his Maratha captains, and gave him 12,000 troops with which to conquer it. More was completely victorious. After a series of fights he drove the Shirkes from the lands which they had held for so many years. Besides the fief, Yusuf Adil Shah conferred on More the title of Chandra Raja, or Moon-lord, to be held by him in perpetuity. Parsoji's son, Yeshwant Rao, added fresh glory to the family fame. In the great defeat inflicted in 1524 on Burhan Nizam Shah I by Ismail Adil Shah, Yeshwant Rao captured the green standard of the Ahmadnagar army. For this feat More received the perpetual title of Raja and leave to keep the royal standard as a trophy. For seven generations the Mores governed Jaoli without leaving any enduring trace of their rule. The eighth in descent from Parsoji was one Krishnaji, called like his forebears Chandra Rao More. When harassed by a rising of the Kolis or the wild tribes of the valleys, he vowed that he would, if successful, give

<sup>1</sup> This period is called the Kanyagat.

the god Mahableshwar a silver image weighing half a maund. <sup>1</sup> Either by the god's help or his own skill, he put down the rising, and in his gratitude he more than kept his promise. He not only had the silver image prepared but had a stately temple built, which stands to this day. Inside it is a pool into which the waters of the five rivers continuously flow. Beside them is a sixth channel reserved for the waters of the Ganges. Krishnaji had five sons, Balaji, Daulat, Hanmant, Govind and Yeshwant. The eldest, Balaji, succeeded to the title of Raja and Chandra Rao. The younger sons received a village each. To Daulat went the village of Shivthar; Hanmant inherited Jor, Govind, Jambli; and Yeshwant, Bahuli. In Shivaji's youth Jyabai had taken him on a pilgrimage to Mahableshwar. While there she was attracted by the beauty of Balaji More's three daughters.<sup>1</sup> She asked for one of them as a bride for Shivaji. But Balaji More, who regarded the Bhosles as inferior to his own ancient house, declined the offer. When Shivaji later pressed More to join in the revolt against the Bijapur government, More again refused, pleading this time his loyalty to Mahomed Adil Shah. At the suggestion of the Bijapur government, More now allowed Baji Shamraj to use his fief as a base from which to surprise and kill Shivaji. The attempt failed as it deserved. Shivaji's spies were as well informed as those of Bijapur. He learnt of Baji Shamraj's design, and moving secretly from Mahad, fell upon his band as they lay in wait and drove them with considerable loss into Jaol.

In 1653 Shahaji, after four years of restraint, was permitted to return to Bangalore. There he found everything in disorder. The chiefs whom his armies had subdued had revolted during his absence, and in one of the fights which ensued, his favourite son Sambhaji had fallen. A Musulman named Mustafa Khan claimed to have certain rights in the fortress of Kanakgiri, which had been conferred by the Bijapur government on Shahaji Bhosle. Instigated, if not actually aided, by a member of the royal household named Afzul Khan, Mustafa Khan overpowered Shahaji's garrison and occupied Kanakgiri. Sambhaji went there with a force, but found Mustafa Khan prepared to resist. Sambhaji sent a letter to Mustafa Khan, urging him to refer the dispute to the king at Bijapur. While negotiations were proceeding, Mustafa Khan treacherously ordered his artillerymen to hit, if they could, Sambhaji and the knot of officers round him. The batteries opened fire and a cannon-ball, hitting Sambhaji, killed him instantly. The treachery profited Mustafa Khan but little. When Shahaji once more reached Bangalore he led another body of troops to Kanakgiri and stormed it. With superb generosity he spared the life of his son's assassins. Towards Ghorpade of Mudhol, Shahaji displayed a different spirit. The king of Bijapur, anxious to protect Ghorpade from his victim's vengeance, made both parties swear in his presence never to molest each other and made them as a proof of friendship, exchange with each other portions of their lands.

<sup>1</sup> Parasnisi MSS. See also *Mahableshwar* by Rao Bahadur Parasnisi.

Shahaji kept his promise in the letter but not in the spirit. He sent to Shivaji an epistle<sup>1</sup> in which he wrote, 'Be careful to complete the work which you have undertaken. By the grace of the Most High may the wives of your enemies ever bathe in their own warm tears. May God crown your hopes with success and increase your prosperity. You will not fail to be courteous always to Baji Ghorpade, for you know the great obligations under which he has laid me.'

Shivaji prized highly the words of approval contained in the missive. He also grasped the real meaning of the last sentence. 'And he resolved, when a fitting chance came, to comply with Shahaji's wishes and exact full vengeance from Baji Ghorpade of Mudhol'

## CHAPTER V

### EARLY SUCCESSES JAOL, JANJIRA, AND PRA'TAPGAD

A.D. 1655 TO 1659

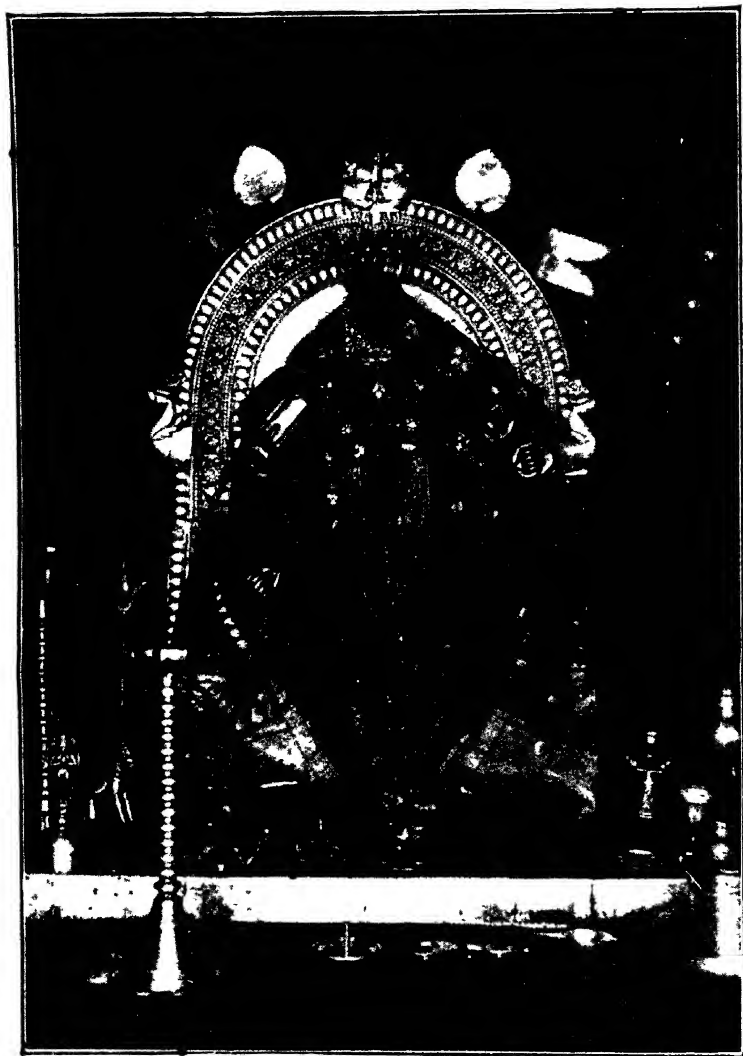
BEFORE carrying out Shahaji's injunction to punish Baji Ghorpade, Shivaji had his own quarrel to settle with Balaji More. He was, however, loth to destroy one whom he had known in boyhood and he resolved to make an effort to win over More by personal influence. He visited Jaoli himself and in an interview with Balaji More did his utmost by appeals to his religion and patriotism to gain to his side the reluctant noble. He merely wasted his breath. Balaji during the interview tried to secure<sup>2</sup> his visitor's person in order to hand him over, just as Ghorpade had handed over Shahaji, to the Bijapur government. But Shivaji, who had come prepared for treachery, broke loose from his assailants and made his escape. Shivaji now despaired of winning More's alliance. Nevertheless he did not at once declare war. He sent to Jaoli two envoys, Ragho Ballal Atre, a Brahman, and Sambhaji Kayaji, a Maratha, to lay before Balaji an ultimatum. Its terms were that he should at once join Shivaji and give him his daughter in marriage or take the full consequences of refusal. More at first affected to grant Shivaji's demands. Several interviews took place, but Balaji evaded a definite answer. At last it became clear that More was but amusing the envoys in order to gain time. On receiving their report, Shivaji with his army started as if to go to Purandar. By night he changed his direction and occupied Mahabaleshwar. Ragho Ballal Atre now demanded and obtained one more interview with More. What happened is obscure. It is probable that Shivaji's envoys charged Balaji with double dealing and that the latter complained of Shivaji's invasion. High words were exchanged, swords were drawn and Ragho Ballal Atre and Sambhaji Kayaji killed More and his brother (1655). Then fleeing into the jungle they escaped to Shivaji. The latter had not authorized his envoy's acts,

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhari*.

<sup>2</sup> The 'Mahabaleshwar Account,' Parasnis MSS. See also Rao Bahadur D. B. Parasnis, *Mahabaleshwar*, p. 119.







GODDESS BHAVANI OF PRATAPGAD

but as More's non-acceptance of the ultimatum was tantamount to a declaration of war, Shivaji determined to profit by them. He and his troops pushed on at once to Jaoli. They were joined by Balaji's brothers, who had long been on bad terms<sup>1</sup> with him because he had confiscated their villages. Balaji's minister Hanmantrao and Balaji's sons offered a gallant resistance. But their men lacked the discipline of Shivaji's force and the skill of his leadership. Hanmantrao fell fighting and Balaji's sons were overpowered and taken prisoners. Shivaji improved the victory to the utmost. He enlisted in his service More's own troops, and with their aid and that of the brothers, to whom he restored their villages, he overran in a few days the entire fief. In a remote part of it was the strong fort of Wasota, destined many years afterwards to be an English prison. It fell at the first assault and after its fall Shivaji met with no further resistance. He could now consolidate his conquest. He found at Jaoli a large treasure accumulated by successive generations of Mores. With part of it he improved the temple at Old Mahabaleshwar. The remainder he put to a more practical use, namely, the fortification of Pratapgad.<sup>2</sup>

A charming story has been preserved which explains his selection of Pratapgad rather than any of the other hills in the neighbourhood. It had been the practice of the Bhosle family to visit at least once a year the temple of Bhavani, or Parwati, at Tuljapur. After the vision in which she pointed out to Maloji the treasure from which the Bhosles' fortunes rose, she had become the special object of the family worship. But after Shivaji's rebellion it was no longer safe for him to make a pilgrimage to Tuljapur. For it lay far to the east of his territories. He therefore decided to build a temple at Rairi. For this purpose he sent all over India for a suitable piece of marble for the goddess' image. But one night he saw Bhavani in a vision. She told him that her wish was not to have a temple at Rairi but to live close to Mahabaleshwar. Shivaji should search until he found a hill known as the Bhorapya Hill. On its summit he should build a temple for her and a fort for himself. Next morning Shivaji searched for the Bhorapya Hill. A herdsman pointed it out to him about twelve miles to the west of the Mahabaleshwar plateau. When he reached it his vision was confirmed.

<sup>1</sup> The rhyme 'Milale barabhai ani budali Chandra Rai' will be found in the *Shedgavkar Bakhar*.

<sup>2</sup> I have followed the *Shedgavkar Bakhar* here. Grant Duff makes Shivaji build Pratapgad temple later, see Grant Duff, Vol I, p. 204. I think that the former is right, otherwise Shivaji could not have worshipped Bhavani before the battle of Pratapgad.

A tiny portion of More's treasure escaped Shivaji's observation. A number of gold coins had been concealed in an earthen pot and buried in a field in the Krishna valley. More than 250 years afterwards a cultivator accidentally unearthed the pot as he ploughed the field. He and his neighbours shared the coins among themselves. The find reached the ears of the Musulman chief constable of Panchgani. Unhappily for him he fell a victim to his own covetousness. Instead of reporting the matter to his superiors, he forced the villagers to surrender the treasure and thus misappropriated it to his own use. He was arrested. By a curious chance he was tried and convicted by the writer of these pages, then Sessions Judge of Satara, and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment.

on Junnar and Ahmadnagar. On February 24, 1658, he replied<sup>1</sup> that although Shivaji's past misdeeds could hardly be forgotten, yet, since he had repented of them, Aurangzib, as Shivaji would be pleased to learn, would overlook his past misconduct. Provided that he kept true to the alliance, Aurangzib would confirm to him not only all that he had conquered, but all that in the future he would conquer from Bijapur.

The departure of the Moghuls and the contest of the princes for the imperial crown left Shivaji free to renew his campaign against Bijapur. The boy king, saved almost by a miracle from Prince Aurangzib, should at once have applied himself to the reduction of Shivaji. But directly the Moghul peril abated, the quarrels between the foreign and the Deccan nobles rendered the government impotent. In Shivaji's territory reigned everywhere energy and order. He now prepared for an attack on Janjira (A. D. 1659).

Malik Ambar, when regent of Ahmadnagar, had seen the advantages of a strong fleet with which to protect his commerce with the Persian Gulf. He made a naval base on a rocky island off the Konkan coast about twenty miles due west of Rajgad; and in command of his war-ships he placed a number of his countrymen. These Abyssinians were wont to assume the title of Syad and to claim a descent from the Prophet. This title the Marathas corrupted into Sidi. Upon the partition of the Ahmadnagar kingdom the rocky island passed with the mainland to Bijapur. But it never received a name. It was simply known as jazira, or the Island. This Arabic word the Marathas corrupted into Janjira, which serves it as a name to this day. The Bijapur government retained the Abyssinian sailors in their service, but placed over them their own officers, to whom were also entrusted several forts on the mainland. At the time of Shivaji the Bijapur governor was an Afghan called Fatih Khan<sup>2</sup> and it was from his subordinates that Shivaji had in his first direct attack on Bijapur taken the forts of Sala Gossala and Rairi. Since that reverse Fatih Khan had shown more alertness and his spies had carefully watched Shivaji's movements. The latter nevertheless was confident of success. He equipped an efficient force, into which he admitted 800 Afghan mercenaries, and defended the act by telling his somewhat scandalized followers that those who sought to found an empire must have the sympathy and the help of all classes and all creeds. He increased his cavalry out of the spoils of Junnar and Ahmadnagar and appointed to command them Netoji Palkar, a brave and enterprising officer. Shivaji had by this time appointed, after the manner of the Bijapur and Ahmadnagar governments, a Peshwa or foreign minister. The holder of the office was a Brahman called Shamraj Nulkant Ranjekar and to him was entrusted the task of overthrowing Fatih Khan. The appointment was a mistake.

<sup>1</sup> Original letter in Parasnis Collection.

<sup>2</sup> Both Grant Duff and Ranade call Fatih Khan a Sidi. But this is incorrect. He was an Afghan officer of Bijapur (*Khafi Khan*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 1).

Shivaji should himself have led the army in an undertaking so arduous. Shamraj proved unequal to it. He was surprised and defeated by Fatih Khan and his army dispersed. • Shivaji strained every nerve to repair the disaster. He sent a large body of fresh troops and ordered Ragho Ballal Atre to assume the command in place of the beaten general. Ragho Ballal Atre not only checked the pursuit but soon forced Fatih Khan to act on the defensive. Moro Pingle succeeded Shamraj as Peshwa, and Shivaji, Pingle and Netaji Palkar spent the monsoon of 1659 in equipping a force large enough to overwhelm Fatih Khan in the following winter and seize Janjira.

Shivaji however was forced to change his plans to meet a new and formidable danger. Shamraj's repulse before Janjira had put fresh heart into the Bijapur government. The young king at his mother's suggestion called on the nobles of his court to volunteer for the command of an army destined to destroy Shivaji and his followers. The first to step forward was one Afzul Khan, a man of great stature and strength. He was the son of the dowager queen's brother, who was superintendent of the royal kitchen. He was the same man who, as I have already mentioned, instigated Mustafa Khan's rebellion, in the course of which Shivaji's elder brother Sambhaji fell. Afzul Khan had also been governor of Wal on the upper reaches of the Krishna and he knew well the country round Jaoli. The king gladly accepted his services and placed him at the head of a fine army composed of 12,000<sup>1</sup> horse and well equipped with cannon, stores and ammunition. His instructions were to take Shivaji dead or alive. Failing that, he was to recover Shivaji's recent conquests from Bijapur. Afzul Khan made the boastful reply that he would not only take Shivaji prisoner, but would make him ride on his own horse back to Bijapur.

In spite of these brave words, evil omens, so the Maratha chroniclers love to relate, repeatedly warned Afzul Khan against the enterprise. As he reviewed his army before the first march, Fatih Lashkar, the picked elephant of the Bijapur stables, died.<sup>2</sup> When Afzul Khan went to say good-bye to his priest,<sup>3</sup> the latter recoiled in horror, for he could see in front of him only a headless figure. Nothing daunted by these omens, Afzul Khan set out in September 1659 from Bijapur. He seems to have first intended to turn Shivaji's southern fortresses by a wide flanking march. He, therefore, marched almost due north from Bijapur to Tuljapur. This was, and is still, a favourite shrine of Bhavani and was, as I have said, especially dear to the Bhosle family. Knowing this, Afzul Khan resolved to desecrate it. The priests suspected his intentions and before his arrival moved the goddess' image to a place of safety. Unable to destroy the image, Afzul Khan had a cow killed and its blood sprinkled throughout the temple.<sup>4</sup> In the meanwhile Shivaji, hearing of Afzul Khan's advance, had retired with his troops from Rajgad to Jaoli, where the difficulties of the country would enable him better to meet the Bijapur army.

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff estimates the force at 5,000 horse and 7,000 foot; all the Hindu writers estimate it at 12,000 horse.

<sup>2</sup> Ballad of Afzul Khan. <sup>3</sup> *Shedgavkar Bakhar*. <sup>4</sup> Ballad of Afzul Khan.

Afzul Khan at once altered his line of march and turned south-west, crossing the Bhima river at Pandharpur. Here also he desecrated the temples and threw the image of Pundalik into the water. The idol of Krishna standing on a brick was saved from his fury by the vigilance of the Brahmins. From Pandharpur, Afzul Khan marched through Rahimatpur to Wai, where he amused himself by preparing a cage for Shivaji's confinement. At the same time he sent a messenger to Shivaji inviting him to a conference at Wai. But Shivaji by now had had some experience of Bijapur ways. Vishvasrao,<sup>1</sup> a Prabhu by caste and the chief of Shivaji's secret service, had already made his way dressed in a fakir's garb into Afzul Khan's camp and had heard him boast that he meant to entrap Shivaji and take him prisoner to Bijapur. This information Vishvasrao at once communicated to his master. When Afzul Khan's envoy, Krishnaji Bhaskar,<sup>2</sup> reached Pratapgad, Shivaji affected to believe his words and expressed himself as anxious to meet the Khan as the latter was to meet him. 'The Khan,' said Krishnaji, 'will use his influence with the Bijapur government to obtain not only forgiveness but formal cessions of all lands in your occupation.' 'If that is so,' replied Shivaji, 'and the Khan is really well-affected towards me, I shall gladly meet him at Jaoli. But I fear to go as far as Wai. Here I can make every preparation for his reception.'

Krishnaji Bhaskar spent the night at Pratapgad. In the course of it Shivaji managed to have a secret interview with him. Shivaji told Krishnaji his suspicions and implored him to swear by all that a Hindu held holy and to disclose on oath what the Khan's real intentions were. Did he mean, as Shivaji's spies had warned him, to entrap him, or did Afzul Khan mean really to befriend him at the court? Krishnaji confessed that Shivaji's suspicions were well-founded and that Afzul Khan intended treachery and nothing else. Shivaji retired to his own quarters and the same night he saw in a vision the goddess Bhavani. She complained to him of the desecration of the temple at Tuljapur and, as her champion, she called upon him to avenge her. By next morning Shivaji had made up his mind. He knew now what Afzul Khan had really planned and he resolved that if Afzul Khan attempted treachery he alone should suffer. He publicly sent by his own officer, Pantoji Gopinath, a formal invitation to Afzul Khan to meet him at Pratapgad a fortnight later. This would give him the time needed to prepare a road along which the Bijapur general and his army should pass. After the envoy had left, Shivaji impressed all the villagers and cut through the forest a wide road over the Radtondi pass. It was then a tree-clad shoulder of the Mahabaleshwar plateau. It is now the daily meeting place of scores of carriages and is known as Bombay Point. All along the road Shivaji had stores of food placed, so that the Khan and his army should want nothing. At the same time he posted men throughout the jungle off the road,

<sup>1</sup> *Shedgavkar Bakhar*. His full name was Vishvasrao Nanaji Muse Khorekar.

<sup>2</sup> Krishnaji Bhaskar was Kulkarni of Wai and Diwan of Afzul Khan. He sent him to Shivaji.

so that no movement of Afzul Khan should pass unnoticed. In the meanwhile Afzul Khan's envoy, Krishnaji Bhaskar,<sup>1</sup> together with Shivaji's agent, Pantoji Gopinath, had reached War and had given Shivaji's message. Krishnaji Bhaskar added to it, 'The king is timid. He dares not come to you for the interview. If you but go to Jaoli and assure him of your protection you will easily induce him to return with you to Bijapur.' Afzul Khan, confident in his troops and in his own personal strength, sent back a message to Shivaji accepting his invitation.

When the fortnight had elapsed, Afzul Khan struck his camp and marched over the Mahabaleshwar plateau. At each halting place he found ample provisions for his troops who marched gaily along, ignorant that thousands of hostile eyes watched them from the neighbouring thickets. They descended the Radtondi pass, but as they went, yet another ill-omen warned Afzul Khan of approaching disaster. The elephant which carried the royal standard stopped dead and refused to move.<sup>2</sup> But the Bijapur general was as blind to omens as the Greek warriors who marched against Thebes. The standard was placed on another elephant's back and the army, reaching the Koyna valley, encamped at Par, a small village at the foot of Pratapgad.

The interview was fixed for the following evening and the place chosen was a spot about a quarter of a mile from the fort walls. Shivaji had a shamiana erected and furnished with rich carpets and costly hangings. In the morning he bathed and ate his breakfast as usual. In the afternoon he lay down and slept, as if no danger awaited him. After rising he visited the temple of Bhavanī and implored her help. Next he took into his confidence his comrade Tanaji Malusare, the Peshwa Moro Pingle and Netoji Palkar. They were ordered to post troops round the flanks and rear of the Bijapur army so as to cut off all possibility of retreat in case Afzul Khan attempted treachery. The signal for their attack was to be a blast on a horn. Shivaji then called a council and named in the event of his death his young son Sambhaji as his heir and Netoji Palkar as regent. Last of all he visited his mother Jijabai. She begged him not to meet Afzul Khan. Shivaji, however, stood firm in his resolve. 'The Hindu Gods,' he said, 'angered with Afzul Khan, will, if need be, fight on my side.' At length Jijabai gave way, blessed him, and as he left her said, 'Be careful, my son, be careful and take vengeance for Sambhaji your brother.'

Shivaji then prepared himself to meet the treachery which he anticipated. He put on a coat of chain armour. Over it he put on a gold-embroidered coat. On his head he fastened a steel cap and wound over and round it a long cloth turban. Into his left hand he fitted the steel points known as *waghnakh* or tiger claws. He concealed a small dagger known as a *vinchu* or scorpion in his right

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff calls the envoy Pantoji Gopinath. This is incorrect. He was Shivaji's officer (see *Shivadigvijaya* and *Shedgavkar Bakhars*).

<sup>2</sup> Afzul Khan Ballal.

sleeve. Then fully equipped he began to descend the hill accompanied by Jivba Mahala, Sambhaji Kavaji and a third whose name has not survived. In the meantime Afzul Khan was being carried up Pratapgad in a palankeen. At his side went Krishnaji Bhaskar. Behind them followed a large body of armed men. Krishnaji pointed out that if the Khan hoped to dupe Shivaji, he had better leave his soldiers behind. Afzul Khan agreed and reduced his escort to the same number as Shivaji's. One of these, however, was a famous swordsman named Sayad Banda. Shivaji, seeing Sayad Banda, sent a messenger to say that he feared his presence and offered to dismiss one of his attendants, if Afzul Khan left Sayad Banda behind. Afzul Khan consented and Sayad Banda halted. Shivaji then sent away his third attendant and accompanied only by Jivba Mahala and Sambhaji Kavaji advanced to greet the man who had now entered the *shamiana*. Shivaji appeared to be unarmed and Afzul Khan, who carried a sword, thought that the moment had come to seize him. He addressed Shivaji in insulting tones and asked how a common peasant like him came to have the riches displayed in the *shamiana*. Shivaji replied hotly that that was his business, and not Afzul Khan's, whose father was nothing but a cook.<sup>1</sup> The Khan, enraged at the taunt, seized with the left arm Shivaji by the neck, forcing his head under his armpit. At the same time the Khan with his sword tried to stab him in the stomach. The coat of mail turned the point.

Nevertheless Shivaji was in great peril. Although expecting treachery he had yet been taken unawares. To use a term from the prize ring, he was in a chancery, and by a common trick of Indian wrestlers Afzul Khan was trying to dislocate Shivaji's neck by twisting his head. As he afterwards said when relating the scene to a friend,<sup>2</sup> he was on the point of fainting. Had he done so he would have been lost. Suddenly he thought of his divine mission. Hope and courage returned. He swung his left arm round the Khan's waist as he raised his right arm for a second blow. The steel claws bit deeply into the Khan's stomach and as he winced with the pain, Shivaji freed his right arm and drove the dagger into his enemy's back. Afzul Khan broke away and aimed a mighty blow at Shivaji's head, which cut through the turban and the steel cap, inflicting a slight scalp wound. Shivaji snatched a sword from Jivba Mahala who carried two, and struck the Khan through his left shoulder. He fell, calling for help. Sayad Banda and his other attendants rushed up. They placed Afzul Khan in a palankeen and tried to carry him back to Par. But Shivaji and Jivba Mahala overcame Sayad Banda, and Sambhaji Kavaji, running after the *palki* bearers slashed at their legs until they dropped their burden. Sambhaji then cut off the dying man's head and brought it back to Shivaji. The latter blew his horn. From every corner of the thick jungle poured out bodies of foot-soldiers and squadrons of

<sup>1</sup> Afzul Khan Ballard. Shivaji's taunt referred to the post of superintendent of the royal kitchen held by Afzul Khan's father.

<sup>2</sup> Ramdas. Shivaji said that his courage returned when he thought of Ramdas; but I take it that he meant that he thought of Ramdas and all that Ramdas stood for—the Hindu temples, gods and castes.

cavalry. The battle was ended in a few seconds. The Bijapur horsemen, completely surprised, were ridden over by Netaji Palkar before they had time to mount. Those who tried to escape on foot were cut off by Shivaji's infantry. Numbers fell, but at Shivaji's orders all who surrendered were spared. The Maratha prisoners were allowed to enlist in Shivaji's service. A body of 300 cavalry, including Fazal Mahomed, Afzul Khan's son, managed with the help of one Khandoji Khopade to escape to Karad. But the entire camp, treasury, stores, horses, elephants and cannon of the Bijapur force fell into Shivaji's hands. Much of this booty he distributed as rewards among his troops. On Pantoji Gopinath he bestowed the village of Hivare. To Visvasrao, the spy who had first warned him against Afzul Khan's treachery, he gave a large sum in gold. Then carrying in one hand Afzul Khan's bleeding head, he went to see his mother. She had watched the scene from the top of Pratapgad and when he came with the ghastly trophy, she blessed him and thanked him for avenging Sambhaji's death. The dead man's head Shivaji buried on the top of the hill as an offer to Bhavani and built over it a tower which he called the Afzul Buruj or tower of Afzul Khan. The general's sword is still preserved as a trophy by Shivaji's descendant. The gold-headed pole which supported his tent was given by the conqueror to the Mahaleshwar temple which it yet adorns. And the tomb erected by Shivaji, where the dead man's body was reverently buried, may be seen to-day on the slopes of Pratapgad.

## CHAPTER VI

### MUDHOL, PANHALA AND SAVANTVADI

A D 1660 to 1662

THE news of Afzul Khan's death and the complete destruction of his army produced the wildest consternation in Bijapur. The dead general was the first cousin of Ali Adil Shah, and the queen mother, at whose suggestion Afzul Khan had been appointed to the command, felt her nephew's death most deeply. She refused for several days to eat or drink. And not only she, but the king and the whole Bijapur court, put on mourning robes for Afzul Khan.<sup>2</sup> Nor were the tidings that daily reached the capital calculated to allay their grief. Shivaji's army, swollen by the enlistment of the Bijapur Hindus, spread over all the Bijapur districts in the neighbourhood of Jauli and over the southern Konkan. The Dalvis, an ancient Maratha family in the Bijapur service, were driven from Shingarpur. Panhala, a great fort near Kolhapur, surrendered without a siege to Annaji Datto, Pavangad and Wassantgad fell immediately afterwards. Rangna and Khelna were carried by assault. Shivaji changed the name of the latter place to Vishalgad, by which name I shall hereafter call it.

**For a further discussion of the Afzul Khan incident, see Appendix.  
Sabbasad Bakhar.**



The Bijapur government, in the hope of checking Shivaji's triumphant progress, ordered Rastam Jaman, the commandant of Miraj, at once to move towards Kolhapur and drive the rebel back to Jaoli. It was a counsel of despair, because Rastam Khan's striking force numbered only 3,000 men. Shivaji allowed him to come close to Panhala and then fell upon him with a greatly superior army. 'Rastam Jaman was completely defeated' and he had considerable difficulty in escaping back to Miraj. Shivaji, after the victory, rallied his cavalry and leading them to Bijapur plundered the royal territory up to the very gates of the city. Retreating with his plunder to Vishalgad he deposited it there and descended into the Konkan (January, 1660). There he levied a heavy contribution from the town of Rajapur, captured the fort of Dabhol which had been conceded to him by Aurangzib and returned in triumph to Rajgad.

Ali Adil Shah now resolved to make the whole resources of his kingdom on an attempt to avenge the disaster of Pratapgad. He felt it useless to entrust the duty to any of his hereditary nobles. Intrigue, jealousy and evil-living had rendered them incapable of acting vigorously. The king therefore selected Sidi Johar, an Abyssinian mercenary, and conferred on him the title of Salabat Jang. As his second in command, he named Afzul Khan's son Fazal Mahomed, a high-spirited young man who had escaped from Pratapgad and who longed to retrieve his own honour and his father's death. The king collected an army of 10,000 horse, 14,000 foot and efficient artillery. He instructed Sidi Johar to recover Panhala. At the same time he ordered Fath Khan to issue from Janjira and retake the Konkan. The Savants of Savantvadi undertook to harass Shivaji by an attack on his south-western frontier.

The little country of Savantvadi, or the home of the Savants, lies along the Sahyadris. It is bounded on the north by the Malwan taluka and on the south and west by the Portuguese districts. During the greatness of the Vijayanagar kingdom, Savantvadi had been governed by the Vijayanagar viceroy of Goa. At the close of the fifteenth century Savantvadi fell to the arms of Bijapur, but a local dynasty known as the Desais of Kudal were allowed to continue as governors. In 1554 a national hero of great talents, named Mang Savant, revolted against Bijapur, and driving out the Mughul garrisons remained independent until his death. His son was overthrown, but the family retained a large part of the district as *jaghire* until 1627, when Khem Savant, a descendant of Mang Savant, once more made himself independent. In 1640 he was succeeded by his son Som Savant, and Som Savant, eighteen months later, by his brother Lakham Savant. The latter, to make himself secure, murdered the Desai of Kudal, who still retained a part of Savantvadi. But the outcry against the slayer of a Brahman was so terrible, that in 1650 he tendered his allegiance to Shivaji. Under the title of Sardesai, Shivaji confirmed to him as his vassal the possession of the whole south Konkan. After the defeat of Shamraj by Fath Khan of Janjira, Lakham Savant had

wavered in his allegiance, but upon seeing the skill with which the disaster had been repaired, he executed a fresh instrument by which he bound himself to pay half the revenues of the south Konkan and Savantvadi to Shivaji, and to maintain for his use a force of 3,000 infantry. But Lakham Savant was a faithless ally. He now tried to secure the king of Bijapur's pardon by attacking his overlord wherewith defending himself against Bijapur and Janjira.<sup>1</sup>

Assailed from three sides, Shivaji skilfully distributed his forces. Ragho Ballal was sent to keep in check Fatih Khan. Bajji Phasalkar marched with an infantry force to repel the invasion of Lakham Savant. Shivaji threw himself with a strong garrison into Panhala and ordered Netoji Palkar to harass Sidi Johar until the monsoon burst. Then Shivaji hoped the Bijapur army would retire. At first Shivaji's arrangements proved successful. Neither Fatih Khan nor Lakham Savant was able to effect anything against the troops opposed to them. Sidi Johar invested Panhala, but Netoji Palkar's cavalry cut his communications incessantly, while the garrison made repeated sorties. Picked bodies of Mawal infantry crept along ravines round Panhala and nightly rushed the besiegers, causing them heavy losses. But the investing army was large and Sidi Johar a veteran commander. He drove in the outposts of the garrison until he commanded and blocked all the ravines. At the same time his own light horse operated vigorously against Netoji Palkar. Fatih Khan, by a skilful use of his fleet, won some successes against Ragho Ballal, while Savant Kaya, a relative of Lakham Savant, fought a drawn battle against Bajji Phasalkar, in which both commanders lost their lives.<sup>2</sup> The monsoon, during which Shivaji had expected Sidi Johar's retirement, burst, but the stout old Abyssinian paid no heed to the pouring rain and he pressed the siege with unremitting energy. Shivaji's situation was now extremely serious. Famine was beginning to make itself felt among the garrison. September had come and the dry season would soon be at hand. The fall of Panhala would then be certain, and its fall meant his capture and the ruin of all his hopes.

But if his situation was grave, never was his mind more resourceful or his courage higher. He sent a messenger to Sidi Johar, informing him that he was anxious to surrender and proposing a personal interview. The Abyssinian, who was a man of honour, granted it. He received Shivaji with all courtesy and the two leaders spent the day negotiating for the surrender of Panhala. In the evening some points remained unsettled. They were reserved for the following morning. Shivaji was permitted to return unmolested to Panhala. The besiegers were convinced that next day would see the fall of the great fortress and considered themselves entitled to a little relaxation after months of toil and exposure. The sentries slept at their posts. The dinners of the officers were more convivial than usual. About midnight Shivaji and a body of chosen troops left Panhala. They descended, not by any of the regular roads, but by a different path known as 'Shivaji's window'. In perfect silence they picked their

<sup>1</sup> *Bombay Gazetteer*, Vol. X, p. 44.

way through the sleeping enemy and taking a westerly direction began to march, as only Maratha hillmen can, towards Vishalgad.<sup>1</sup> It was impossible long to conceal the flight of a large body of troops. Before it dawned, Shivaji's escape had been discovered and Fazal Mahomed begged and obtained leave to pursue him with a force of cavalry. Sidi Johar promised to follow him with a large body of infantry. In the wooded country through which Shivaji led his force, men on foot can move as quickly as men on horseback. Nevertheless desire for revenge lent wings to Fazal Mahomed. About noon his leading squadron sighted Shivaji's foot soldiers. The position was critical. Vishalgad was yet six miles off and his men were worn with want of sleep and fatigue. But the great king's coolness did not desert him. He detached half his troops to form a rearguard and placed it under the command of one Bajji Deshpande with orders to resist to the last at a place called Pandhar Pani, 'white water'. In the meantime Shivaji with the main body of his troops would make for Vishalgad with all expedition. When he had reached it, he would fire five guns as a signal. Bajji Deshpande was then to break off the fight and retire as best as he could to Vishalgad. The officer to whom the perilous post of rearguard commander was entrusted had recently been in arms against Shivaji. He was of the same family as the Deshpandes of Kohida, who had helped him in his early days. But Bajji Deshpande had served Chandra Rao More, and in the contest between him and Shivaji, Bajji had stood by his master even after his death. Eventually Bajji had joined Shivaji's service. He was a Kayastha Prabhu and a few words about that most attractive and lovable caste may not be out of place.

<sup>1</sup> I have already (see *Tale of the Tulsi Plant*, 2nd edition p. 29), expressed the opinion that Shivaji fled to Vishalgad and not to Rangna. I rely chiefly on (1) local tradition, (2) the *Vishalgad Bakhar* and (3) the greater distance of Rangna from Panhala. As regards (3) it is reasonable to suppose that Shivaji, other things equal, would have fled to the nearest fortress. Now Vishalgad is forty miles from Panhala, while Rangna by the shortest road is over sixty. Nor is Vishalgad any less strong than Rangna. Both descend into the Konkan. Thus neither can be starved out. Again the road to Vishalgad is through a dense forest, through which infantry can move as quickly as cavalry. The road to Rangna lies through open country. Had Shivaji taken it, he would have soon been overtaken by the Bijapur horse. It is no doubt true that both Grant Duff and Ranade mention Rangna as the place to which Shivaji fled. But both these eminent writers appear to have relied on the *Chitnis Bakhar*. On the other hand, the *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar* is curiously ambiguous. It says that Shivaji first went to Vishalgad and then to Rangna. But Shivaji could not have started before 11 p.m., and according to Grant Duff he was overtaken before noon. In other words he would have had to cover a hundred miles in thirteen hours, marching continuously at a rate of nearly eight miles an hour. This was an impossible speed even for Mawal infantry. It is further noteworthy that the *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar* says (1) that Deshpande fought his rearguard action at Pandhare Jalav, clearly the same place as Pandhar Pani which is only six miles from Vishalgad, and (2) that afterwards the Muslims encamped at Gajapuri and besieged Shivaji at Vishalgad. Lastly it must not be forgotten that Shivaji had stored his recent booty at Vishalgad. He would naturally fall back there so as to protect it. In these circumstances, I think, there is good reason for affirming that Shivaji escaped to Vishalgad and not to Rangna.

Its members account for their origin by the following tale. A certain Sahasrarjuna, otherwise known as Kritavirya, was once king of the Haihyas and had a thousand arms. In his kingdom lived a sage called Jamadagni who, wishing to attain perfect freedom from all human passions, cast them from him. Among them was Anger. Before leaving Jamadagni, Anger warned him that he was making a mistake, for without Anger man could achieve nothing. Jamadagni, however, intent only on attaining complete *sanyas*, heeded not the warning and bade Anger depart with the other passions. Some days later king Sahasrarjuna came to Jamadagni's hermitage. The sage was out. But his wife bade the king welcome. He repaid her hospitality in churlish fashion by stealing her sacred calf. This act led to a dispute between the sage and the king. But as Jamadagni had lost all power to get angry, he was unable to lift his hand against his royal foe. The latter gave him twenty-one wounds on the head and killed him. Now among Jamadagni's sons was one Rama, called Parashurama, or 'Rama with the axe', a weapon given him by the god Shiva. He was the sixth incarnation of the god Vishnu and when he heard of his father's death he took a fearful vengeance. For each wound that Jamadagni had received, he cleared the earth once of the Kshatriyas, or warrior class, to which Sahasrarjuna belonged. Among his victims was Sahasrarjuna's son Chandrasena. His wife, who was pregnant, fled to the hermitage of the sage Dalabhya. Parashurama heard of the flight and following her demanded her of the sage. The latter complied so readily that Parashurama promised to give him any boon for which he asked. The sage at once asked for the life of the child still in the princess' womb. Parashurama granted the boon, but stipulated that the child, if a boy, should become a writer and not a warrior, and that instead of Kshatriya he should call himself Kayastha, as he had been spared in his mother's *kaya* or body. Whatever truth may underlie this legend, it is certain that Kayastha Prabhus unite the qualities both of warriors and writers. They are brave and loyal, laborious and intelligent.

On this occasion Bajji Deshpande proved himself worthy of his caste. He gladly accepted the post of honour and occupying a height near Pandhar Pani awaited the attack of the Musulman cavalry. These Bajji Deshpande, favoured by the precipitous ground, repulsed without difficulty. After some delay some Musulman infantry came up and relieved the cavalry. Nevertheless Bajji Deshpande and the rearguard successively repulsed two attacks. At noon a still larger contingent of infantry arrived. Fazal Mahomed led it up the slope in person. The rearguard began to give ground, but the gallant Deshpande rallied them until he fell, covered with wounds.<sup>1</sup> Just then the boom of five guns was heard from Vishalgad and the dying hero knew that his task was over. His men lifted his body and, retiring in good order, bore it safely to Vishalgad.

Sidi Johar, disheartened at Shivaji's escape, encamped at Gajapuri, a village near Vishalgad. After some delay, due to uncertainty as to

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar.*

what course to pursue, he resolved to besiege Vishalgad. That fort, however, cannot be invested from the western side. For it falls 2,000 feet sheer into the Konkan, whence Shivaji could easily obtain provisions. Sidi Johar tried to mine the eastern fortifications, but Shivaji detecting the mine countermined and destroyed the Bijapur sappers. At last Ali Adil Shah, furious at this second failure, relieved Sidi Johar of his command and assumed it himself. The royal army, inspired by the king's presence, achieved several successes. He renewed the siege of Panhala which fell, together with all the other forts recently captured by Shivaji except Rangna and Vishalgad. These two on the very edge of the Sahyadris are exposed to an intensely heavy rainfall. Ali Adil Shah, therefore, resolved to leave them until the following dry season. When the monsoon broke he withdrew to a town called Chimu<sup>1</sup> on the banks of the Krishna. Shivaji, to compensate himself for the loss of his fortresses, attacked Danda Rappur, a port a few miles to the north-west of Janjira. Two reasons prompted his action. The first was the wealth of the port, from which he exacted a large contribution. The second was the presence of some English factors whom he rightly or wrongly suspected of helping Fath Khan to defend Janjira. He took them prisoners and did not release them until he had obtained a considerable ransom. During the monsoon Shivaji laid siege to Janjira. This time he led the besieging force in person. Nevertheless he was unable to effect his purpose. Fath Khan's ships held the sea and the island was too far from the mainland for Shivaji's artillery to produce any effect. At last Shivaji, so the story runs,<sup>2</sup> had a dream in which he saw Varuna. The Sea-god spoke to him and said, 'Janjira will never fall into your hands. To take it is beyond your strength. I shall give you another island on which to erect a fortress equal to Janjira.' When Shivaji awoke he resolved to raise the siege and, believing an island off Vishu in, known as Sindhu Durg, to be the island of which the Sea-god had spoken, fortified it and made it a naval base.

Shivaji had another and perhaps a better reason for raising the siege. The Savants of Savantvadi proposed to the court of Bijapur a further plan of campaign. If they were supported by the Bijapur army and by Bajji Ghorpade of Mudhol, they undertook to engage Shivaji with success. The king agreed and sent one Bahlol Khan with a force to co-operate with the Savants and Bajji Ghorpade. Had Shivaji waited until the confederates had completed their preparations, the Savants' scheme might have succeeded. But that was not Shivaji's way. He went back to Vishalgad, which is about equidistant from Mudhol in the Doab and Savantvadi in the southern Konkan. There, in the winter of 1661-2, he learnt from his father that Bajji Ghorpade was at Mudhol with only a small force.<sup>3</sup> Instantly Shivaji with 3,000 horse strode forth from Vishalgad. With extraordinary swiftness he reached Mudhol, completely surprising his father's enemy. Now was the time to take vengeance, and he took it to the full. Bajji Ghorpade fought bravely, but he, his followers and his sons were all killed.

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdurgvijaya Bakhar*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*.

Shivaji marched through the fief stripping it of everything portable and destroying the rest. As he wrote in a letter<sup>1</sup> to his father informing him of his victory, the booty was enormous. The king of Bijapur sent a reinforcement under one Khawas Khan to replace the loss of Baji Ghorpade and his troops. But Shivaji intercepted Khawas Khan and, to use his own words, drove him back 'sad and despondent' to Bijapur.

That government had at this time to suffer further ill-fortune. Sidi Johar, who had so nearly succeeded in ending the war by the capture of Shivaji, deeply resented his supersession and disgrace. He at first retired to his own estate and then began to intrigue with the Hindu nobles of the Doab, who, fired by the example of Shivaji, had risen against Ali Adil Shah. That king, unaware of Sidi Johar's treachery, appointed him to command an army to suppress the rising. This gave the angry general the chance which he sought. So far from acting against the Doab nobles, he not only helped them as far as he could but entered into a correspondence with Shivaji himself. The prince, however, was too prudent to be drawn into a distant expedition. Nevertheless Sidi Johar thought the time fitting for rebellion and attacked the Phaltan contingent, when separated from the main Bijapur army by the Tungabhadra river. The treachery failed. The Phaltan chief rallied his men and eventually repulsed Sidi Johar who, not long afterwards, was assassinated by his own soldiers. But although his rebellion was unsuccessful, it yet caused the rising in the Doab to spread in every direction. The great stronghold of Raichur, so often lost and taken by the troops of Vijayanagar, defied the king's authority. So, too, did the lesser fortress of Torgal. Ali Adil Shah was forced to recall the army sent to co-operate with the Savants of Savantvadi. Those unhappy chiefs were now left to bear the full weight of Shivaji's anger. In vain they called in the aid of the Portuguese. The latter sent them a force too small to be of any use.<sup>2</sup> And Shivaji, falling upon the allies, dispersed their army and overran the whole fief of the Savants. They fell back on the fort of Phonda to the south-east of Goa. But Shivaji blew up one of the bastions and the fort became untenable. The unhappy Savants had now no hope save in the clemency of the conqueror. 'We are Bhosles like yourself,' they pleaded, 'extend to us therefore your protection. Take half our revenue and leave to us the other half. If you do so, we shall equip three thousand men and serve always as your allies.' Shivaji accepted the terms, but insisted on the surrender of Phonda fort, and from that day forward Savantvadi was his vassal state. The Portuguese, however, had incurred Shivaji's wrath by aiding the Savants. He invaded the country round Goa, and forced the Governor-General to sue for peace and to supply him with muskets, ammunition and cannon (A.D. 1662).

The king of Bijapur, with the Doab unsubdued, his ally the chief of Mudhol dead, the Savants in Shivaji's power, was in no state to

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Shivaji's letter, see Appendix.

renew the war. Nor had Shivaji any wish to prolong it. He had throughout his life but one aim and that was to free the Maratha race from Musulman rule.<sup>1</sup> The portion subject to Bijapur, he had freed. He now wished to keep it free from the Moghuls by forming a triple alliance between himself and the States of Bijapur and Golconda, which might defy Moghul aggression and enable him to liberate that portion of Maharashtra which had been conquered by the Delhi emperors. When both sides are anxious to end a war, peace usually comes without much difficulty. A convenient mediator was at hand in Shahaji. He had neglected his son in his youth, but now felt intensely proud of him. And nothing delighted him more than the successful attack on Mudhol and the fall of Bajji Ghorpade. On the other hand Shivaji also felt proud of his distinguished father and, on hearing that the Bijapur government had appointed Shahaji as their envoy, sent him by a messenger a cordial welcome.

Shahaji set out on his journey with no less pomp and circumstance than if he had been about to visit Delhi. He first consulted astrologers and, learning that the stars were propitious, he took with him his second wife Tukabai and her son Vyankoji. Shahaji first journeyed to Tuljapur, where he did homage to Bhavani for the favours which she had lavished on her son. From Tuljapur he visited Shingnapur where he worshipped at the family shrine of the Bhosles and the tomb of his father Maloji. Next he went to Pandharpur and prostrated himself before the image of Vitthoba, which had, by the vigilance of the priests, escaped the destructive fury of Afzul Khan. Thence he travelled to Jejuri, a famous shrine of the god Khandoba in the Poona district.

By arrangement with his father, Shivaji was to await him at Jejuri. On hearing of Shahaji's near approach, Shivaji sent his Peshwa, Moro Pingle, to meet him. After an interval he set out himself, accompanied by his mother Jijabai and his two wives Saubai and Soyarabai. But while Moro Pingle rode on until he met Shahaji, Shivaji and the ladies with him halted at the temple and there awaited Shahaji's cavalcade. He made fitting offerings to his gods, and when Shahaji arrived he prostrated himself at full length and laid his head upon his father's feet. Shivaji's two wives next greeted with profound respect their father-in-law, and Jijabai greeted her husband. The salutations over, Shahaji entered his palankeen, but Shivaji would neither enter one nor mount his horse. He walked back to Jejuri village barefoot to do his father's honour. When father and son reached the pavilion erected for Shahaji's reception, Shivaji refused to sit down in his father's presence. But standing in front of him with hands across his breast, he repeatedly implored Shahaji's pardon for the youthful disobedience which had led to his father's imprisonment. Shahaji, deeply touched, embraced his son and said that all was forgiven to one who sought to free his countrymen. He pressed his son to

<sup>1</sup> Ranade, pp. 87, 88. So long as we bear this aim in mind, Shivaji's conduct with regard to both the Delhi and Bijapur governments is clear. If not, it is difficult, if not impossible, to understand it.

continue in his appointed task and begged him after he had himself passed away to extend to Vyankoji his love and protection. From Jejuri father and son went to Poona. There the terms of a treaty between Shivaji and Bijapur were settled. The Bijapur government granted all Shivaji's demands (A.D. 1662). He was left in possession of his conquests from Kalyan in the north to Phonda in the south, and from Dabhol in the west to Indapur in the east, and his complete independence was acknowledged. Both parties undertook to defend the other from foreign aggression. And Shivaji took a solemn oath not to molest Bijapur during Shahaji's lifetime.

Shivaji entertained in royal style Shahaji's party during the rainy season. When the monsoon had abated, Shivaji took Shahaji with him to Rajgad and Purandar, Lohgad and Rairi. When they reached Rairi, Shahaji's experienced eye took in its extraordinary strength. Lying to the west of the Sahyadris, it is surrounded on every side by a sea of mountains. It rises, however, higher than any of its neighbours. To climb it to-day, when undefended, is a most arduous task. To storm it, if properly fortified and garrisoned, was to Shivaji's contemporaries an absolute impossibility. Shahaji urged his son to change his chief stronghold from Rajgad to Rairi. Shivaji, convinced by his father's reasoning, agreed. He changed the name of the great hill from Rairi to Raygad and appointed Abaji Sondev to fortify it and to build on its summit public buildings and a palace for himself. At its base, but elevated some hundred feet above the plain, he was to erect a dwelling place for Jijabai. When the work of fortification was complete, Shivaji issued a proclamation. By it he offered a bag of gold and a gold bracelet worth 100 pagodas to anyone who would ascend the fort by any other path than those which passed through the fort gates.<sup>1</sup> A man of the Mhar caste came forward and undertook with Shivaji's permission to try. If he succeeded, he would plant a flag at the top. Shivaji smiled and bade him try. But the Mhar proved equal to the task. Climbing by a path known to him from boyhood he disappeared from Shivaji's view. Not long afterwards the watchers saw the Mhar's flag fluttering on the summit. He then descended, prostrated himself at his prince's feet and received the promised reward. Shivaji closed the path by a gate still known as *Chor Darwaja* or the thief's door. Not long afterwards another event occurred which showed that Abaji Sondev's work was not yet complete. A cowherd's wife named Hirakani, or 'diamond', had entered Raygad fort to sell milk to the garrison. Engaged in the task, she had not noticed that night was falling. When she tried to leave, she found the gates closed and the guards obdurate. In her house below she had a child and a mother-in-law. Sooner than neglect the one or incur the wrath of the other, she scrambled down the hill-side at the risk of her life and reached home the same night. Shivaji heard of the feat and built a bastion to close the path which she had taken. The bastion he called the Hirakani Tower, thus immortalizing the name of the venturesome herdsman. All ways to the fortress closed, Shivaji

<sup>1</sup> *Khafi Khan*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 288.



moved his treasures and state papers to Raygad and from this date it became the seat of his government. In the meantime Shahaji after an affectionate parting with his son, and laden with presents had returned by Bijapur to the headquarters of his own fief.

## CHAPTER VII

### TUKARAM AND RAMDAS

At this point it will not be out of place to sketch the lives of two men who, each in his own way, exercised an influence upon the Maratha prince. I have in an earlier chapter endeavoured to show how the religious movement of Pandharpur helped the military movement headed by Shivaji. The two saints who were at this time the chief vehicles of that teaching were Tukaram More and Ramdas.

Tukaram More was a *vani*, or grocer by caste, and came of a family of petty traders who lived at Dehu, a beautiful little village fourteen miles to the north-east of Poona. The earliest known ancestor of Tukaram was one Vishvambar who is said to have erected a temple to Krishna and Rukhmini on the banks of the Indrayani. He left two sons. They abandoned the family business, took service in the Ahmadnagar army and fell in action. This unfortunate mishap stamped itself on the family. For six generations afterwards, the Mores were deeply religious and closely attached to the worship of the god Vithoba of Pandharpur. Tukaram's father was one Boloji, and his mother was named Kankai. Their eldest son was Savji, their second son was Tukaram. Their third son was Kanhoba. The date of Tukaram's birth is uncertain. According to Rajwade he was born in *Shake* 1490 (A.D. 1568-9). According to Sir Ramkrishna Bhandarkar he was born in *Shake* 1530 (A.D. 1607-8). His eldest brother Savji developed from earliest youth so strong a taste for the ascetic life that Boloji found it impossible to take him into his shop as an assistant. So when Tukaram was only thirteen years old, his father initiated him into the secrets of the grocery trade. For the next five years Tukaram helped to keep the accounts. When he grew older he received as a bride a girl called Rakma. His wife, however, grew delicate. Boloji therefore married Tukaram to a girl called Jijabai, the daughter of one Appa Gulve, a Poona money-lender. On her marriage, Tukaram gave her the name of Avalai. When Tukaram was eighteen years old, his father Boloji died. Kankai died soon afterwards. The unhappy Tukaram was left to carry on the family business, to support his two wives, his eldest brother Savji whose ascetic life rendered him useless as a bread-winner, and his youngest brother Kanhoba who was still a child. Tukaram's gentle nature proved unequal to the task. He was too soft-hearted to take rigorous measures against his debtors. So they one after another repudiated their debts. Before the shop could recover from this shock, there came a famine. Tukaram became a

bankrupt. His delicate wife Rakma died of privation. Her little son Shivaji did not long survive her. Savji left Dehu to go to some distant shrine and was never heard of again.

These calamities completely changed Tukaram's life. From being an active although a too kind-hearted business man, his thoughts turned, as Savji's had done, to religion and he became a whole-hearted devotee of Vithoba of Pandharpur. Indeed, but for his wife Avalai's influence, he would have disappeared like his elder brother. Her name has become equivalent to a scold or termagant, the Maratha synonym of Xanthippe. Yet there is no doubt that she saved Tukaram. For him and for their children she worked like a common labourer. She begged food and money for them from her parent's house. And if she at times lost her temper, this is not surprising. She was never sure that her husband would not give what she had begged to a passing tramp. One day indeed while she was bathing, he gave away her clothes. But Tukaram's devotion to the god Vithoba came, in course of time, to have its reward. Once a farmer employed him to drive the birds away from his crop. Tukaram, however, soon became lost in his dreams of the Pandharpur god. And when the farmer returned he found that the birds had eaten up almost his entire crop. He dragged Tukaram to the village headman and made him execute a bond for two *khandis* of grain, that is to say a bumper crop, and in return to take over the produce of the ruined field. The transaction over, Avalai made Tukaram reap what remained. He did so and to the amazement of the villagers and the disgust of the farmer, the reaped crop amounted to eighteen *khandis*. The god had worked a miracle on his worshipper's behalf. Avalai was overjoyed. But her joy was shortlived. Her husband resolved to return to Vithoba what Vithoba had given and devoted the proceeds of the crops to repairing the temple which his ancestor Vishvambar had built many years before.

Avalai made a last effort to give her husband a fresh start in business. She borrowed Rs. 200 from her father and sent Tukaram with a party of hawkers to sell the goods bought by her with the money. All went well until the hawkers reached Supa. There Tukaram witnessed the eviction of a poor indebted Brahman. Tukaram gave at once his goods to satisfy the Brahman's creditors. Then slipping away from his companions, he walked to Pandharpur, where he joined the crowd of devotees who worshipped before Vithoba's image. The villagers of Dehu were now satisfied that Tukaram was a lunatic. When he returned home, they put a necklace of onions round his neck, mounted him on a donkey and paraded him through the streets to be mocked at by the crowd. The unhappy Tukaram fled from the village and hid in the Bhambunath hills. His brother Kanhoba went in search of him and having found him begged him either to return to Dehu and manage the family business or to let him do it. Tukaram went back with him. The brothers agreed to divide the bonds passed to their father by his debtors. The division complete, Tukaram flung his share of the bonds into the Indrayani. He then went back to his former hiding place in the Bhambunath hills.

His wife Avalai tracked him out and daily brought him his dinner. One day a thorn entered her foot and made her faint with the pain. Touched with Avalai's devotion he returned home with her. But it was impossible for him to take up again the petty cares and duties of a grocer. In the silence of the hills there had come to him the poet's inspiration, and from the day of his return to that of his death, he never ceased to write poems either in praise of Vithoba or narrating incidents in his own life. They are written in the *abhang* metre. They are rudely constructed, but full of force, and above all they embody to the fullest extent the pure teaching of the doctrines of Pandharpur.

Ramdas was a later contemporary of Tukaram.<sup>1</sup> He was the son of a certain Suryajpant and his wife Ranubai. For a long time they had no children. But they prayed diligently to the Sun-god for offspring. At last he appeared to them and promised that they should have two sons. One of them would be an incarnation of himself, the other of Maruti the monkey-god, who helped the divine hero Ramchandra. A year afterwards Ranubai gave birth to a son whom she named Gangadhar, and three years later she gave birth to a second son whom she called Narayan in honour of the Sun-god. From their earliest years both children showed a taste for religion and it is said that to Narayan, when only five years old, was vouchsafed a vision of Maruti. According to the custom of the time Gangadhar was married when seven years old. A year or two later Narayan's marriage was arranged. But from his earliest years Narayan showed an intense dislike for the married state. At last he compromised by promising his mother that he would do or say nothing until he came to that part of the ceremony when the cloth which separates the married pair is withdrawn. She hoped that then Narayan would feel it too late to go back. When the priests, however, were about to repeat the verses that complete the ceremony, they as usual cried out to the audience: '*Savadhan*' or 'Be on your guard'. Narayan instantly fled from the room and was not found for some days afterwards. Suryajpant and Ranubai now gave up the idea of marrying their son, and let him wander about the various shrines of India. Numerous stories exist of the miracles performed by him while yet a child. Of these the most interesting is the following, for it shows the great capacity of him with whom Shivaji was so much associated.

One day Narayan went to beg at the house of the *kulkarni* of Shahapur near Karad. He found the ladies in a state of great perplexity. A Musulman officer from Bijapur had just arrested the *kulkarni* on a charge of misappropriation and had taken him away to the capital. Narayan overtook the officer and his victim and went with him. At Bijapur he posed as the *kulkarni's* clerk and so perfect was his knowledge of accounts, that he was able to convince the authorities that the charge was false.

When Narayan grew to manhood he established himself at Chapal

<sup>1</sup> The account of Ramdas is taken from his *Life* by his disciple, Hanmant Swami.

in the Satara district. There he built a temple to the hero-god Ramchandra and, believing himself to be an incarnation of the monkey-god Maruti, he changed his name from Narayan to Ramdas which, being interpreted, means 'the slave of Rama'. Gradually the fame of the new saint spread over Maharashtra and attracted to Chaphal a number of disciples. In course of time it reached the ears of Shivaji. The latter had just started his wonderful career. One day a Hindu *gosavi*, or mendicant, advised him to take a *guru*, or spiritual preceptor, as that was the surest way to obtain salvation. The young hero consulted Bhavani and from her learnt that Ramdas was his destined *guru*. Shivaji at once went to Chaphal. Ramdas was not there when Shivaji reached it; so he had to return home with his wish ungratified. Not long afterwards he again went to Chaphal. Once more Ramdas was absent. But the prince wandered in search of him to Mahabaleshwar, Wai and Mahuli. At last Ramdas, who knew that Shivaji sought to find him, wrote him a letter. It was in verse and may be translated as follows :—

'O Meru of Resolution, O Helper of many, of unchanged resolve; rich and master of your passions! O thou who pourest benefits on others, whose qualities are incomparable; Lord of men, horses and elephants! Lord of forts, earth and ocean! Leader and king, who art strong always. King triumphant and famous, powerful and generous, meritorious, virtuous and wise. Possessed ever of conduct and judgment, generosity and faith, knowledge and character. Bold and generous, grave and daring, swift to execute. Thou who by thy vigilance didst spurn kings. The holy places were broken. The abodes of Brahmans were polluted. All earth was shaken. Religion had fled. Narayan resolved to protect the gods, the faith, the cows, the Brahmans and inspired thee to do so. Near thee are many wise pandits, great poets, men skilled in sacrifice and learned in the Vedas; men quick and shrewd and fitted to lead assemblies. None of this earth protects the faith as thou dost. Because of thee some of it has lingered in Maharashtra. A few have sheltered themselves with thee and still some holy acts are done. Honour to thy glory! It has spread all over the earth. Some evil men thou hast killed. Some have fled in terror. Some thou hast pardoned, King Shiva the fortunate! I have lived in thy country. But thou didst never ask for me. Thou didst forget me; why, I do not know. Thy councillors are all wise, the faith incarnate. What can I say to thee? It behoves thee to keep alive thy fame as the establisher of religion. Many are the affairs of state in which thou art busied. If I have written unreasonably, may I be pardoned!'

Shivaji's desire to see the saint was stimulated by the praises contained in his letter. He again went to Chaphal and not finding him, pressed one of his female disciples to disclose the saint's hiding place.

<sup>1</sup> The date of Shivaji's meeting with Ramdas is the subject of much controversy. It seems to have occurred in 1649 (*Itihas Sangraha*).

She at last told the king that Ramdas was at Shringanwadi. She then offered her visitor food. But Shivaji vowed that he would eat nothing until he had seen the object of his search. He procured a guide and at last found Ramdas. He was sitting under a tree and was composing verses for his famous *Dasbodh*. The king begged his pardon for his remissness in the past. In return the saint blessed the king. Shivaji then asked Ramdas to give him advice on the art of government, and after some little time he received a second metrical letter which may be translated as follows.—

‘I bow to Ganpati the remover of obstacles. I bow to Saraswati, to the virtuous, to the saints, to the family gods, to Rama. If my hearers so wish, let them profit. If not, let them disregard my writing; I have written for the sake of your government. He who governs wisely obtains happiness. If your labours are untiring, you will win in the end.

‘First learn to know men. If you find a man is a worker, give him work to do. If he is useless, put him aside. To see, to understand, to labour, in this there is nothing amiss. Achievement depends on the quality of the worker. If he be industrious but at the same time obstinate, still he is in your greatness indulgent. But if he be indolent and treacherous, then execute him. Learn correctly the thoughts of all. To keep men pleased, to keep the wicked sternly at a distance, these are the signs of good fortune. If a man has helped you reasonably, suffer him a little but not so that wrong may follow. Transgress not the bounds of justice. If they be transgressed, evil ensues. If there is no justice, there is no remedy. He who has wearied in ill-fortune, he whose head has been turned by good fortune, he who has proved coward in the hour of need, such are not true men. In evil times be not despondent. Try every remedy; in the end all will be well. Keep all men under proper control. Then the wise will value your rule. If there be no proper control, the government grows weak. Do not go in the van of the battle. Such is not true statecraft. There are many whom you can send as generals. Have many officers. Do not appoint all to one task. Give them in your wisdom separate tasks. If a leader’s pride is fired, he will not look to his life. Gather together many leaders and then strike. When the sheep see the tiger’s claw, they flee on all sides. What can the proud buffalo do, big though he be? Let kings observe the religion of kings. Let Kshatriyas observe the religion of Kshatriyas. Let your horses, weapons and horsemen be ever your first thought; so that when your picked troops approach, your enemies, great though they be, shall flee away.

‘Thus I have spoken a few words on the art of government.

When the minds of lords and servants are one it is good.’

When Shivaji wished to return home, he presented the saint with a large sum of money, but Ramdas distributed it among his cowherds. The prince urged Ramdas to live with him. Ramdas declined, but he gave him as a farewell gift a cocoanut, water, earth, a few pebbles

and some horse dung. These Shivaji took with him to his mother. Jijabai asked scornfully the meaning of such a present. Her son with rare insight had penetrated the sage's meaning. The water and the earth meant that Shivaji would conquer Maharashtra. The pebbles meant that he would hold it by means of his fortresses. The horse dung meant that he would win his greatest victories by means of his cavalry.

Unable to induce Ramdas to live with him permanently, Shivaji looked about for a more pliant saint. He heard of Tukaram. That holy man, after his return to his village, had again suffered persecution, but had overcome it. The verses which he had composed on the Bambhunath hills were eagerly read and learned by the peasantry and petty traders. But the Brahmans who lived on the alms of pilgrims to the various shrines resented the competition of one who was of a Sudra caste. One day, as Tukaram sat on the banks of the Indrayani composing verses, some Brahman mendicants seized his books and flung them into the river. But the god whom he loved saved them and restored them, dry and uninjured after thirteen days of immersion. Another time when Tukaram went to a village called Vagholi, a learned Brahman scholar, named Rameshwar, induced the herdsmen to drive Tukaram away. Not long afterwards the same Rameshwar was attacked by some ailment. He went to Alandi and prayed at Dnyandev's shrine that he might be cured. One night he saw in a dream the great teacher. He told Rameshwar that this ailment had come to him as a punishment for his treatment of Tukaram. Let Rameshwar ask Tukaram's pardon and treat him with honour instead of contumely and the ailment would go. Rameshwar obeyed the saint's command and was cured of his illness. In his gratitude he sang far and wide the praises of Tukaram. In this way Shivaji came to hear of him. He sent a messenger and a body of horse to convey Tukaram to him. But the saint felt that the camp of a high-spirited and warlike prince was no place for him. He declined the invitation in a metrical letter, of which I give the first five stanzas<sup>1</sup> :—

'Torches, umbrellas and horses, these are not among things good for me. Why, O lord of Pandhari, dost thou entangle me among such? Honour, ostentation and aping other men's ways, I court as the dung of swine. O God, says Tuka, run to set me free from this!

'Thou providest me with the very things that I dislike; why dost thou persecute me when I have surrendered my soul to thee? I feel that I should avoid society and keep the world far from me. I should seek a solitary place and utter no sound. I should look on mankind, wealth and my body as though they were vomit. Yet it rests with thee, Lord of Pandhari, says Tuka.

'The creator has founded the universe, therein are various designs and diversions afoot. A child of one design, you are devoted to Brahma and knowledge of Brahma; you are faith-

<sup>1</sup> The translation is taken from the admirable work of Messrs. Nelson Fraser and Marathe.

fully loyal to your teacher. Part of your love I learnt when I saw the writing in your letter. Shiva is your name, the sacred name that has been given to you; you have the right of the umbrella, you are one of the threads that keep the world together. Vows, rites, austerities, contemplation, mystic arts; all these you have studied and dispensed with. Your mind is bent on meeting me; this is the chief import of your letter. Listen, O Lord of the earth, to this my answer; I have written out my prayer and purpose. Let me wander in the forest indifferent to all things. Let the sight of me be vile and inauspicious. My unclad person is covered with dust; I live on fruit, for I have no food to eat. My hands and feet are emaciated; my skin is pallid; what comfort could there be in looking on me? It is my pressing request that you will not even talk of seeing me.

'See how humble my speech is: this is a boon from Him who dwells in my heart. Yet I am not a wretch who need seek a boon from you, I have a refuge in Pandharpur. Pandurang watches over me and feeds me; since that is so, why need I care about others? You wish to see me: what matters this request? I have turned to nothingness all desires. Freedom from desire has been bestowed on me; I have renounced every impulse of activity. As a chaste wife longs to meet her husband, so let me live joyously in Vithal (Krishna). The universe to me is Vithal and nothing else; in you too I see Him. I looked upon you as Vithal (Krishna), but one difficulty keeps me from you. Fix your thoughts on the good teacher, Ramdas; he truly is an ornament of the world; do not swerve from him. If your impulse carry you in many directions, how can you serve Ramdas? Tuka says, O Father, O sea of wisdom, faith and love are the vessels that carry the faithful across the stream of life.

'What would it profit me to enter your presence? The fatigue of the journey would be wasted. If I must needs beg my food, there are many whom I may ask for alms. In the lanes are rags to furnish me with shelter. The rock is an excellent bed to sleep on. I have the sky above me for a cloak. With such a provision made, why need I fix my hopes on anyone? It would be a waste of my days. Should I come to your palace seeking honour, what peace of mind should I find there? In a king's palace the wealthy are respected; the common herd meet with no respect. If I saw there fine apparel and men wearing jewels, it would at once be the death of me. If you are disgusted when you hear this, still, God will not scorn me. Let me tell you this surprising news, there is no happiness like the beggar's. Austerity and renunciation are the greatest things; wealthy men fettered by desire live miserably. Tuka says you are opulent and honoured, but the devotees of Hari (Krishna) are more fortunate.'

This refusal only whetted Shivaji's wish to see Tukaram. He left his camp and joining Tukaram led with him for several days the life of a religious devotee. From this condition he was rescued by the

influence of his mother, Jijabai. The blood of ancient kings boiled in the proud woman's veins at the thought that her son should give up a hero's life for that of a wandering beggar; and her entreaties, joined to those of Tukaram, induced Shivaji to return to his duties as a warrior and a prince.

Yet although both Tukaram and Ramdas refused to live as religious preceptors with Shivaji, he never lost touch with them. Several times afterwards he attended *kirtans* or religious recitations given by Tukaram. This on one occasion nearly cost the king his life. \*He had invited Tukaram to visit Poona and recite a *katha*, or sacred story, at the temple where Shivaji as a child so often worshipped. Somehow the news of his design reached the ears of his enemies. A body of Afghans stole forth with orders to take Shivaji as he listened to Tukaram. The Afghans surrounded the temple and searched for the prince among the audience. With admirable coolness the saint continued his recitation and Shivaji sat perfectly still listening to it. Nevertheless he would surely have been taken, but for what is believed to have been the divine interposition of the god Krishna. As the Afghans searched, a man in face and in clothes closely resembling Shivaji rose and slipping through the guards ran out of the door. The Afghans rushed out of the temple to seize him. But he ran with incredible swiftness towards Sinhgad. And although mounted Afghans ran close to his heels, they never could quite catch him. On reaching the forest at the base of the great fort he dived into a thicket and disappeared. In the meantime Tukaram continued his story. When it was over, Shivaji and the rest of the audience returned home unmolested.

But it was with Ramdas that Shivaji was peculiarly associated. Tukaram indeed did not long survive his meeting with Shivaji. One day as he was leaving his home he told his wife Avalai that he was going to *vaikuntha*, the god Krishna's heaven. He went to the banks of the Indrayani and, so it is believed, flung himself into the river either in a state of religious excitement or because he suffered from some incurable disease. At any rate he never returned home again. His followers believed—and the belief still finds in the Deccan wide acceptance—that the chariot of the hero-god Ramchandra descended from heaven and bore Tukaram back in it to the skies (A. D. 1649). Ramdas, on the other hand, outlived Shivaji and whenever the busy monarch could spare a few moments, he loved to visit the saint and hear from his lips sacred verses and religious discourses. Many touching stories exist which show how close was the friendship which the prince and the saint bore each other. One day, it is said, Shivaji, then at Pratapgad, heard that Ramdas was at Mahableshwar. He at once rode off to see him. On reaching Mahableshwar he learnt that Ramdas was no longer there. Shivaji plunged into the woods to overtake him. All day the king wandered vainly through the wild hill country. Night fell, but still he searched for Ramdas by torchlight. At last when the eastern sky began to pale, Shivaji came upon Ramdas in a tiny cave. He lay there groaning and seemed to be in great pain and sick unto death. Shivaji in great distress asked



Ramdas how he might help his suffering friend. The saint replied that there was but one cure in the world for such a malady as his. 'Tell me what it is,' said Shivaji, 'and I will get it for you.' 'Nay,' replied Ramdas, 'to get it for me might cost you your life.' 'No matter,' cried the generous hero, 'gladly would I give my life to save yours.' 'Then,' said Ramdas, 'the medicine which alone can save me is the milk of a tigress.' Sword in hand went forth into the jungle the dauntless prince. In a short time he saw some tiger-cubs in a thicket. He entered it and, catching them, sat down by them to await their mother's return. An hour later the tigress came and, seeing her cubs in Shivaji's hands, sprang upon him. The prince boldly faced the raging beast and told her that he but wished to give the dying saint a draught of her milk. The saint's name cowed the tigress. She let Shivaji go and allowed him to draw some of her milk and take it away to Ramdas' cave. There he gave some of it to Ramdas. His pain instantly left him. Then Ramdas in turn made Shivaji drink the rest of the milk. At once the scratches inflicted by the tigress when she first sprang on Shivaji healed. And the king and his retinue rode back with Ramdas to the temple at Mahabaleshwar.

Another time, so it is said, Shivaji was at Satara. Ramdas, who was at Mahuli at the confluence of the Kistna and Yenna, went to beg upon Jaranda Hill, a holy spot a few miles to the east of Mahuli. The king was also visiting the Jaranda temple and met Ramdas. The saint asked for alms. Shivaji wrote some words on a piece of paper and dropped it into the *swami's* lap. Ramdas picked it up and read in it a grant by Shivaji of his entire kingdom. The saint affected to accept the grant and for the whole day Shivaji, having no longer any property, acted as his servant. At the close of the day Ramdas asked Shivaji how he liked the change from kingship to service. Shivaji replied that he was quite happy, no matter what his state, provided that he was near his preceptor. Ramdas then returned the grant and said, 'Take back your kingdom. It is for kings to rule and for Brahmans to do worship.' Nevertheless Shivaji insisted that the saint should bestow on him his sandals as Rama had done to his brother Bharata, so that the world might know that Ramdas and not he was the true king. He also chose for his flag the orange-brown banner which the pilgrims carry when they go to worship Krishna at Pandharpur.<sup>1</sup>

Another time, so it is said, Shivaji begged Ramdas to live with him always and let him serve him as he had done for a single day at Jaranda. Ramdas asked him in return whether, instead of serving him, Shivaji would grant him three boons. Shivaji said that he would do so gladly.

The boons asked for were:—

- (1) Shivaji should in the month of Shravan, or August, honour Shiva by giving feasts to Brahmans and by distributing images of the great god, whose incarnation he was deemed to be;

<sup>1</sup> This is known in history as the *bhagva zenda*.

- (2) he should distribute *dakshina*, or gifts of money, to Brahmans in Shravan; and
- (3) he should honour the hero-god Ramchandra by ordering his subjects when they met to say to each other by way of greeting, 'Ram Ram.'

Shivaji granted all these boons and 'Ram Ram' are still the words of greeting used by the Deccan Hindus when they meet.<sup>1</sup>

Yet another time Shivaji was building a fort at Samangad in Kolhapur territory. As he watched it, he felt a natural pride that he should be able to support all the workmen that the work needed. Just then Ramdas came up. Shivaji, after saluting him, walked with him round the base of the fortress. On their way they passed a boulder. Ramdas called to some stone-cutters and bade them break it in pieces. The stone-cutters did so. In the heart of it was a cavity half filled with water. Out of the water jumped a frog. Ramdas turned to Shivaji and said, 'O king, who but you could have placed water in the middle of the stone and thus saved the frog?' Shivaji disclaimed any connexion with the matter. But when Ramdas insisted, he guessed that the saint was rebuking him for his vanity. He at once acknowledged his fault and admitted that it was god who had alike provided for the needs of the frog and for those of the workmen at Samangad.

But if Ramdas dared to rebuke the great king to his face, he refused always to go beyond his own sphere of action. Peter the Hermit, having inspired a crusade, aspired afterwards to lead it. The foolish Scotch ministers led their countrymen to ruin on the field of Dunbar. But when Shivaji, on hearing of Afzul Khan's march from Bijapur, asked for Ramdas' advice, the wise Brahman bade the king pray for counsel to Bhavani. He knew that if God had given him power to move men's hearts by verse and prayer, God had given to Shivaji other and greater powers and that his resourceful mind, if left to itself, would find a key to every difficulty.<sup>2</sup>

Ramdas would have liked always to lead the wandering life, such as had been his before Shivaji first sought him. But the king insisted that he should make his headquarters at some easily accessible spot. He bestowed on the saint the fortress of Parali, a wild hill some six miles south-west of Satara. Ramdas reluctantly accepted the gift and built there a temple to Maruti. For the use of the temple the king assigned to Ramdas the revenue of Chaphal and 32 other villages. As he grew older, Ramdas came to spend more and more of his time at Parali. It was there that Shivaji paid him his last visit. It was there that Sambhaji, reeking with the blood of Rajaram's friends,

<sup>1</sup> The old form of salutation was the 'Johar'. It is still used by the Mhars and depressed castes.

<sup>2</sup> Ramdas' words were:—'You are a king and control the affairs of your state. I dwell in the forest and (in state matters) you cannot depend upon me. Set your hand to the task and act as you think you should act. I have already told you how to obtain the guidance of the goddess (Bhavani). Bear my words in mind. The goddess cares for you. By her blessing you have attained the kingship. Consult her before you act, tell her your troubles and act on her advice.'—Hanmant's *Ramdas Charitra*.

sought but was denied an interview. At last the wise old Brahman felt his end approaching. His disciples felt it also and gave way to grief. But Ramdas' courage never forsook him. He rebuked their tears and composed for them the following verses :—

'Although my body has gone I shall still live in spirit. Grieve not. Read my books. They will show you the way to salvation. Heed not unduly the wants of the body. Fall not into evil ways, and to you the doors of salvation will open. Keep ever in your heart the image of the god Rama.'

A few minutes later the dying saint called out the words 'Har ! Har !' twenty-one times. Then his lips whispered the words 'Ram ! Ram !' His eyes sought the image of the hero-god, and a flame, so it seemed to the onlookers, left his mouth and entered that of the image. His disciples called to him, but he was dead.<sup>2</sup> He had survived Shivaji less than a year. Ramdas' body was burnt to the north of Parali upon a pyre of *bel* and *tuls* wood. His ashes were then gathered and taken to Chaphal, and after some interval were, at Sambhaji's cost, conveyed northward and cast reverently into the Ganges.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE MOGHUL WAR

A.D. 1662 TO 1665

SHIVAJI, allied to the Bijapur king, in whose plighted word he trusted, thought himself strong enough to attempt the liberation of the Marathi-speaking subjects of the emperor. Nor was a good ground for hostilities lacking. In May 1661, the Moghuls had occupied Kalyan in the Konkan, the town which Shivaji had taken from Mulana Ahmad. He had been unable to recover it at the time. He now sent Netaji Palkar with a force of cavalry and Moro Pingle with a strong body of infantry to plunder the Moghul territories from Ahmadnagar to Aurangabad. A curious story exists<sup>3</sup> that the imperial officers complained to Shaistekhan, the governor of the Moghul Deccan, that they were unable through fear of the Marathas to send to Aurangabad, the provincial capital, their revenue collections. In reply the governor sent them a sarcastic letter. 'Although you are men,' he wrote, 'you fear to meet the Marathas. I am sending you a woman who will not fear to do so.' At the same time he collected troops and placed over them a certain Rai Bagin,<sup>4</sup> the wife of one Udaram Deshmukh. In spite of her sex she was a skilful and daring soldier. Nevertheless Shivaji attacked her, took

<sup>1</sup> A name of Shiva.

<sup>2</sup> Ramdas died at 12 noon on Magh Vadya 9 in *Shaka* 1603 (A.D. 1681).

<sup>3</sup> *Shedgavkar Bakhar*.

<sup>4</sup> *Shivdignajaya Bakhar*. The *Sabhasad Bakhar*, which Grant Duff has followed, makes Rai Bagin take part in the fight at Khadase.

her prisoner and dispersed her army. Shortly afterwards Shivaji defeated near Ahmadnagar another force sent from Aurangabad under a Rajput officer.<sup>1</sup> He then swept the Moghul Deccan as far as its capital and levied contributions from every town of importance.

Aurangzib, on hearing of Shivaji's successes, urged Shaistekhan, who was his own maternal uncle, not to stand on the defensive, but to invade and conquer the territories which Shivaji had taken from Bijapur. Shaistekhan, agreeable to these orders, collected such Moghul forces as were then in the Deccan. He left one Mumtaz Khan at Aurangabad and placed his second-in-command Jaswant Singh, Maharaja of Jodhpur, in charge of his reserves. He himself marched to Ahmadnagar and after a short halt marched thence due south to Pedgaon.<sup>2</sup> From Pedgaon he sent Jadhavrao of Sindkhed,<sup>3</sup> a Maratha noble, ahead with his cavalry. Several sharp skirmishes took place between him and Shivaji's horse. The imperial cavalry were in the main successful. And as Shivaji fell back on Rajgad, they occupied first Supa and then Poona. Shivaji as a counter-move threw himself into Sinhgad, only thirteen miles away. It was no doubt Shaistekhan's intention eventually to invest Sinhgad. But before doing so he wished to clear his communications. Chakan lay on the high road between him and Junnar, the nearest town large enough to furnish him with supplies. The commandant of Chakan was still that Phirangoji Narsala who had, on Dadoji Kondadev's death, acknowledged Shivaji as his master. He now proved himself a gallant soldier. His defence was favoured by the heavy rains of the Sahyadris, which were then falling, and by the efforts of Netaji Palkar's cavalry to harass the besiegers. Nevertheless the conduct of the garrison and of Phirangoji Narsala deserves all praise. On dark, rainy nights they made desperate sallies and frequently rushed the Moghul trenches. In the end, however, the garrison were driven back into Chakan and after a siege of 50 or 60 days the Moghuls exploded a mine which carried away a bastion and the men defending it.<sup>4</sup> The Moghuls placed their shields in front of their faces and tried to cut their way through the breach. Phirangoji, however, was not yet willing to surrender. He had prepared an earthwork inside the fort wall and there he and his men stood desperately at bay. All that day the Moghuls assaulted the work in vain. And during the following night both the besiegers and the besieged slept close to each other among the ruins of the bastion. Next morning the Moghuls received reinforcements and drove the garrison back from the trenches into the citadel. Invested there and without supplies, Phirangoji Narsala capitulated. Shaistekhan received him with all honour and offered him a post in his own service. Phirangoji Narsala declined, and Shaistekhan suffered him and the remnant of his garrison to return to Shivaji. As the brave commandant bade Shaistekhan farewell, the latter told him that if ever he wished to join the Moghul service, an

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar.*

<sup>2</sup> In Ahmadnagar district.

<sup>3</sup> *Khafi Khan.*

<sup>4</sup> 'Stones, bricks and men flew into the air like pigeons.' *Khafi Khan, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 252.*

honourable post awaited him. Phirangoji returned to Shivaji. The latter received his lieutenant cordially and made him commandant of Bhupakgad.<sup>1</sup>

By this time Shivaji had withdrawn from Sinhgad to Rajgad. There he received a letter from Shaistekhan. It contained a Persian stanza in which Shivaji was derided as a monkey, whose only safety lay in his mountain forests. In return Shivaji sent Shaistekhan a Sanskrit couplet.<sup>2</sup> Therein he asserted that he was not only a monkey but Hanuman himself—the prince of monkeys; and he vowed that he would destroy Shaistekhan just as the monkeys had helped King Rama to destroy the demon Ravan. Shaistekhan after this exchange of compliments returned from Chakan to Poona, where he occupied Shivaji's old house, the Raj Mahal. He was however well aware of Shivaji's resourcefulness and courage and posted a ring of patrols all round Poona. He then dismissed every Maratha horse soldier from his cavalry and forbade all Hindus, whether civilians or soldiers, to enter or leave Poona without a pass. He did not venture to dismiss his Maratha infantry for fear of reducing too greatly his army. His neglect to do so proved his undoing. In April 1663,<sup>3</sup> Shivaji, Yesaji Kank, Tanaji Malusare<sup>4</sup> and 200 picked men disguised themselves as foot-soldiers in the imperial service and obtained permission from the *kotwal* for a marriage party to enter the town. In front went a boy dressed as a bridegroom.<sup>5</sup> Behind him walked Shivaji and his companions, beating drums and playing *saranais*<sup>6</sup> to keep up the disguise. About the same time another band of Shivaji's men, dressed as foot soldiers, entered by another gate of the town dragging with them a number of their comrades whom they declared to be prisoners of war and whom they beat unmercifully. Outside, but at some distance from Poona, several thousands of Shivaji's infantry concealed themselves, so as to cover his retreat in case of mishap. The two bands that entered the town met at a given spot and changed their garments. About midnight Shivaji posted the bulk of his men, about 500 in number, at various points in the city. He himself, with Tanaji Malusare, Yesaji Kank and some twenty others, went to the Raj Mahal. They tried first to pass through the main entrance.<sup>7</sup> But it was well lit and some watchful eunuchs guarded it. Shivaji therefore turned back and entered the cook-house. There, some of the cooks were at work; others lay asleep. Shivaji and his men noiselessly strangled the former and stabbed the latter to the heart in their sleep.

It was all done so skilfully that no alarm was raised. With pickaxes Shivaji's men next removed some mud and bricks which blocked a window opening into the women's apartments. A servant, whose bed was against the wall, awoke and roused Shaistekhan. The general, too drowsy to hear anything, swore at the servant for awaking him unnecessarily and again went to sleep. A minute or

<sup>1</sup> In Satara district.

<sup>2</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhsh*.

<sup>3</sup> Grant Duff fixes the date by a letter from the English factors imprisoned in Rajapur, dated March 12, 1663.

<sup>4</sup> These were the two friends of his early manhood.

<sup>5</sup> *Khatir Khan*.

<sup>6</sup> A kind of fife.

<sup>7</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhsh*.

two later some of his maids ran in to say that a hole was being made in the wall of their room. Shaistekhan, awake at last, sprang from his bed and seized a spear and his bow and arrows. But by this time Shivaji's party had opened the window and were pouring through it. Shaistekhan shot the first man through the body with an arrow. But the Maratha, before he fell, slashed off Shaistekhan's thumb. The next, Shaistekhan killed with his spear. But another party of Shivaji's men had by now overpowered the eunuchs and had forced their way through other doors. In vain Shaistekhan's servants beat drums for help. Shivaji's men bolted the doors behind them. Shaistekhan's son, Abdul Fatih Khan, rushed at the Marathas, but after killing two or three was himself cut down. His gallantry, however, enabled two maid-servants to drag Shaistekhan, faint with pain, to a place of safety. An unfortunate nobleman in his train and similar to him in age and appearance tried to escape by a rope ladder. But the Marathas saw him and, believing him to be Shaistekhan, killed him and cut off his head. Shivaji, thinking the Moghul general dead, opened the doors and after collecting all his men, fled as fast as possible out of Poona. Before they could be overtaken, they had joined the main body of infantry left as supports, and with them Shivaji retreated to the Katraj Ghat, the pass which crosses the range of hills of which the fort of Sinhgad forms the western extremity. To the trees that grew along the top of the Katraj hill the Marathas fastened blazing torches, so that the Moghuls might believe that a large army was encamped upon its summit. Shivaji then led his men due west and went back as swiftly as he could to Sinhgad. The Moghuls had by this time heard of the raid and seeing the lights on the Katraj pass marched there with all expedition. On reaching the foot of it they made a careful disposition of their force and with barren valour stormed the empty summit, thus giving Shivaji and his men the necessary time to reach their stronghold. Shaistekhan some hours later followed them to the fort of Sinhgad. This, however, was mere bravado. He had no siege guns with him. The rainy season was close at hand, when the rise of the Muta river which has its source near Sinhgad would make siege operations extremely difficult. The Khan's folly was duly punished. Shivaji allowed the Moghul army to come close to the fortress and then fired into them point blank with his heavy artillery. Numbers fell, and Shaistekhan's riding elephant was killed by a cannon-ball.<sup>1</sup> The Moghul general had no alternative but to order a retreat to Poona. But even so he did not escape from his difficulties. As the Moghuls retired, their cavalry were ambushed by a party of Maratha horse under Kadtoj Guzar,<sup>2</sup> Netoji Palkar's most brilliant lieutenant, and were driven back with great loss upon the main body.<sup>3</sup>

On Shaistekhan's return to Poona, Jaswant Singh, his second-in-command, called on his chief to express his regret. Shaistekhan was now beside himself with pain and vexation. Instead of accepting

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar*.

<sup>2</sup> Better known as Prataprao Guzar.

<sup>3</sup> Grant Duff, p. 197.

the Maharaja's condolences with courtesy, he remained for some moments silent and then said, 'I thought the maharaja was in His Majesty's service when this evil befell me.' The Rajput prince, who commanded the reserves and was therefore in no way responsible for the mishap, left the Raj Mahal in a fury. Shaistekhan reported his conduct to Aurangzib and declared that all his Hindu subordinates were in league with Shivaji. After sending his letter, Shaistekhan, in a fit of childish temper, evacuated Poona and marched with most of his troops back to Aurangabad, exclaiming that he would trust no one and that, if he stayed, the loss of his head would soon follow the loss of his thumb. He, however, ordered Jaswant Singh to hold Junnar and Chakan. The maharaja did his best to repair the effect of his superior's imbecility by attempting, when the rains ceased, to invest Sinhgad. But his forces were inadequate. He therefore raised the siege and fell back on Chakan. On receiving Shaistekhan's letter the emperor censured both him and Jaswant Singh. But he recalled the former and gave the command of the Deccan army to his son, Prince Muazzim (July 15, 1663).

After his failure to take Sinhgad, Jaswant Singh remained inactive. His enemy, however, was planning a counter-attack on one of the richest possessions of Aurangzib. In South Gujarat, near the mouth of the Tapti river is the town of Surat. Unlike most of the great cities of the east it has no very ancient history. It was sacked by Mahomed Ghorî, the conqueror of Delhi, and by Mahomed Tughlak while engaged with the rebellious nobles of Gujarat. But its inhabitants trace its prosperity to a certain Gopi, either a Nagar or Anavala Brahman. He was the son of a poor Brahman widow who lived in the latter half of the fifteenth century. While still a lad, he resolved to leave his native town and boldly to seek his fortunes at Delhi. Although a Hindu, he was an accomplished Persian scholar and he hoped to get a clerkship in one of the imperial offices. For some days he sought employment in vain. Nevertheless he continued to frequent the public buildings on the chance of a vacancy. One evening the chance came. A high official brought for perusal an important Persian letter. It was so late that the expert Persian readers had all left and the script was so crabbed that the official could not himself decipher it. Nevertheless he sat by a candle vainly trying to master its contents. At last he saw Gopi sitting near him and in despair he asked his help. Without even taking the letter in his hand, Gopi, to the official's astonishment, told him at once its full purport. While the other was trying to spell out word by word the baffling hieroglyphics, Gopi had read them through the paper held up against the light. The official at once appointed Gopi to a high and well-paid post, wherein he soon accumulated a respectable fortune. Taking it with him, he returned to his native town and induced other rich merchants to settle there also. The place grew beyond all recognition, until at last Gopi, now its first citizen, asked the leave of the king of Gujarat to call it Suraj, after his wife who had stood by him

<sup>1</sup> *Khafe Khan*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 271.

through both ill-torture and prosperity. The king agreed, but changed Suraj into Surat so that the lady's name might agree with the heading of certain chapters in the *Koran*.

In A.D. 1512, the Portuguese, jealous of the trade and wealth of the new emporium, took and sacked it. Thereupon the king of Gujarat ordered a fort to be built. But the fort was badly constructed and in A.D. 1530 and 1531 the Portuguese ships again entered the Tapti and plundered the town. The king of Gujarat then resolved to build a castle on the banks of the river and entrusted the work to a Turk called Safi Agha. The Portuguese bribed him to delay the work. Nevertheless he completed it about 1546. It was strongly fortified on the river side, and on the land side it was protected by a ditch, six feet wide, and had a rampart 35 yards wide. In 1573, Akbar conquered Surat and in the same year made a treaty with the Portuguese, who soon became the chief merchants of Surat and the masters of the Arabian Sea. But in 1580, an irreparable calamity overtook the little country whose innumerable heroes had spread her fame to the farthest corners of the civilized world. Philip II inherited the crown of Portugal, and as the apanage of the Castilian kings, Portugal shared in their misfortunes. In 1579, Holland had revolted and soon every Portuguese possession was either conquered or threatened by hardy sailors from the mouth of the Scheldt or from the shores of the Zuyder Zee. In 1616, a Dutch merchant, Van den Broeck, came to Surat. Two years later the Moghul emperor gave the Dutch the right to build there a small permanent settlement, known in the parlance of the time as a factory.

About the same time as the Dutch, came another race from the fog-wrapped islands that divide the North Sea from the eastern Atlantic. On December 31, 1600, the English queen Elizabeth granted a charter to a number of London merchants who had associated themselves together under the title of the East India Company. In 1612, Mr Kerridge, in the *Hoseander*, arrived at Surat. He was well-received by the inhabitants, but was attacked by the Portuguese. The English repulsed the attack, and in 1612 the Emperor Shah Jehan gave them leave to build a factory. On the heels of the English and the Dutch followed the French. In 1620, the French Admiral Beaulieu dropped anchor in the Tapti, anxious to buy Surat cloth and sell it to the natives of Sumatra. And in 1642 a French factory rose in Suraj, similar to those built by the English and the Dutch. The enterprise of the foreign merchants and the shiploads of European commodities which every year they brought to the Tapti soon made Surat the richest emporium in the Moghul empire.

Shivaji's plan was, as usual, a masterpiece both of daring and foresight. He gave out that he intended an attack on the Portuguese at Bassein and erected two camps between that port and Choul. While he gathered there a large army, his chief spy, Bahirji Naik, made his way to Surat and brought back a full report of the condition and geography of the town. At the same time Shivaji, disguised as a mendicant, explored the roads that led from the northern Konkan through the Dharampur State into south Gujarat. He then returned



to the two camps, and taking from them 4,000 picked cavalry, he left them again so secretly that none outside his staff knew of his departure. Passing through the territories of the Dharampur chief, whom he had won to his cause, he suddenly appeared<sup>1</sup> on January 5, 1664, some 10 or 12 miles from Surat. The Governor timidly sent a messenger to inquire what Shivaji's intentions were. He also called on the Dutch and English merchants to assist in the defence of the town.<sup>2</sup> Both, however, refused to do more than defend their own factories. But the Dutch sent two messengers to watch the movements of the invading army. They were caught and detained, as was the Governor's messenger, while Shivaji and his cavalry rapidly approached the mud walls of the city. The Governor and the garrison made no efforts to man them, but withdrew into the castle. The inhabitants, deserted by their ruler, took to the river boats and fled into the open country. Shivaji then sent a message to the Governor, summoning him and Haji Sayad, Viji Bohri and Haji Kasim, the three richest merchants in the town, to attend his camp and to ransom Surat; otherwise he would burn it down.<sup>3</sup> The cowardly Governor refused to leave the shelter of the castle walls. So after some time had elapsed, Shivaji ordered his troops to plunder the empty city. A body of Marathas tried to storm the English factory, but were gallantly repulsed. The same night a Mr Anthony Smith, unaware of Shivaji's arrival, rode into Surat from Suvali. He was seized and taken to the king. Shivaji sent him as a messenger to the English and about the same time he sent a Greek merchant named Nicholas Kolostra<sup>4</sup> to the Dutch, to demand ransoms for their factories. The Dutch replied that they had no money. The English sent back a haughty refusal denouncing Shivaji as a rebel. With the small force that the king had at his disposal, he very wisely did not attempt the reduction of the two strongholds, defended as they were by resolute men and containing little or no treasure. He also received kindly a French Capuchin monk named Father Ambrose who bravely went to the Maratha camp and implored the king's protection for the members of his flock. But the Marathas collected or dug up without interruption the property left behind by the rich and timid Surat merchants.<sup>4</sup> On January 10, after he had gathered property worth several thousand pounds, the king received news that a Moghul army was advancing to relieve the city. He at once rallied his troops, loaded the plunder of Surat on the horses of the unfortunate inhabitants and, vanishing as swiftly as he had appeared, brought the treasure of the great town to store it safely in the fort of Raygad.

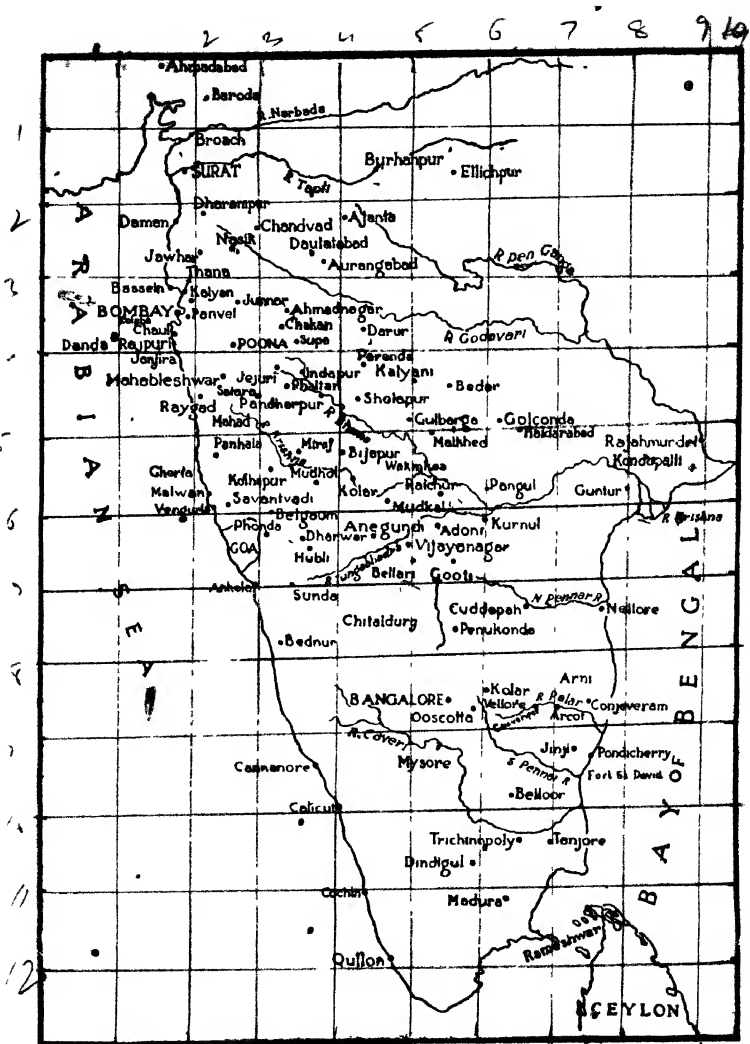
On the return from the Surat expedition, Shivaji heard of his father's death. After peace had been made with Shivaji, the Bijapur

<sup>1</sup> Dutch account in Valentyn's *Lives of the Moghuls*.

<sup>2</sup> English factor's letter in Forrest's *Selections*, Vol. I, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Dutch account.

<sup>4</sup> Aurangzeb was so pleased with the conduct of the Dutch and the English that he reduced the customs duties payable by them from 3½ to 2 per cent. According to Tavernier (*Travels*, pp. 188-9), Shivaji spared the home of a Hindu broker because he had been very charitable.



SKETCH MAP SHOWING PLACES MENTIONED  
IN THE ACCOUNT OF SHIVAJI'S CAMPAIGNS

government were free to devote their whole strength to the task of stamping out the rebellion of the Doab nobles. A number were forced to capitulate. But the chiefs of Bednur and of several other places along the Tungabhadra offered a stout resistance. At last the Bijapur government directed Shahaji to undertake the reduction of the insurgents. The gallant old soldier readily complied. He defeated them in a pitched battle and, investing Bednur, forced the chief to surrender all his lands except Bednur itself and the district round it. Having crushed the rebel leader, Shahaji marched along the north bank of the Tungabhadra, overcoming all resistance. At last he reached the village of Yergatanhalli in Basavapatan and there pitched his camp. The country round swarmed with game and Shahaji thought that his recent efforts had earned him some relaxation. He left his camp for a day's black buck-hunting. Having wounded a buck, he galloped after it at full speed. As he rode, a creeper caught his horse's fore-leg. It fell and Shahaji, thrown violently, broke his neck. His attendants galloped up on seeing the accident, but life was extinct before they reached their master (January, 1664). They at once sent word to his son Vyankoji who hastened to the Doab from Tanjore, cremated Shahaji's body and performed his funeral rites. The Bijapur government expressed most handsomely their appreciation<sup>1</sup> of the dead man's services and bestowed his fiefs of Bangalore and Tanjore on Vyankoji. When the news reached Shivaji, both he and Jijabai were deeply affected. The latter, indeed, was with difficulty restrained from committing *sati*.<sup>2</sup> And only Shivaji's entreaties that she should remain with him a little longer and help him in his holy work induced her to alter her resolve. Shivaji found a different solace for his grief. He resolved to avenge Shahaji's death by attacking the Doab nobles whose rebellion had indirectly caused it.<sup>3</sup> He sent into the Doab a force of cavalry and guns and levied a large contribution. The Bijapur government, to whom the rebels had for several years caused continuous trouble, in no way resented the invasion. On the contrary they granted the village wherein Shahaji had fallen as an *inam*<sup>4</sup> to his son. Thither Shivaji went and, after distributing large sums in charity, erected a building over the spot where Shahaji had fallen. And for many years lamps burnt in it day and night to honour and to comfort the dead man's spirit.<sup>5</sup>

Shahaji's renown has, like Hamilcar's, been overshadowed by that of his more famous son. Nevertheless the achievements, neither of Hannibal nor of Shivaji, could well have been accomplished but for the work done by their fathers before them. Hamilcar, from his Sicilian stronghold, first showed his countrymen that with mobility and good generalship, the Carthaginian army could hold its own against the superior discipline of the Roman legion. Shahaji first showed the Deccan that Hindu troops under a Hindu leader could, with rapid movements and local knowledge, prove a match for the picked forces

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdajivijaya Bakhar*.

<sup>2</sup> Ranade, p. 63.

<sup>3</sup> *Shivdajivijaya Bakhar*.

<sup>4</sup> Shivaji collected the revenue. Bijapur retained the jurisdiction.

<sup>5</sup> See letter in Parasnis MSS. The tomb is now in ruins.

of Delhi or Bijapur. Indeed, had Shahaji been opposed to only one of these two powers, he would most likely have re-established the kingdom of Ahmadnagar and have governed it through a puppet king. This, however, would have been but a doubtful blessing to the Maratha people. Shahaji's kingdom would have inherited the Nizam Shahi traditions of cruelty, treachery and murder. His failure enabled Shivaji to found a government entirely new and, if it be regarded as a whole, singularly free from the political crimes which mar the histories of most Indian states and which were not infrequent among the early kings of Scotland and of England <sup>1</sup>

On Shahaji's death, Shivaji assumed the hereditary title of Raja granted by the king of Ahmadnagar to Maloji. He established a mint at Raygad to show his complete independence of Bijapur and struck, in his own name, both gold and copper coins <sup>2</sup>. He also began to make use of the fleet which he had built or collected at Malwan to plunder all ships issuing from the imperial ports. Unfortunately some of these were ships filled with Mecca pilgrims. This brought on him the wrath of both Delhi and Bijapur. A large Bijapuri force debouched from Panhala and invaded the Konkan. It at first gained some successes, but was eventually defeated and driven back into Bijapur territory. Shivaji, fearing Moghul invasion from the north, did not pursue the beaten army. He had recourse to his fleet and plundered the whole Bijapur coast as far as Gokarn and returned to Raygad to await the expected Moghul attack.

Aurangzib recalled Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur and sent, in his place, Jai Singh, a Rajput veteran who at one time had fought for Prince Dara, and Diler Khan, an Afghan soldier of eminent merit (March, 1665). Aurangzib entrusted a large army to each of the generals and they worked together in perfect harmony. Diler Khan invested Purandar, while Jai Singh blockaded Sinhgad<sup>3</sup> and raided with his cavalry the country between it and Rajgad.

Before the Great War, Purandar was a charming little hill station. It stood over 4,000 feet above the sea and, lying well to the east of the Sahyadris, did not suffer from such heavy rains as most of the mountain forts of Maharashtra. Neat bungalows built by enterprising merchants of Poona could be leased at far lower rents than those demanded in more lordly Mahabaleshwar. The presence of a garrison ensured a constant supply of stores and a small but pleasant society. A broad road 28 miles long took the visitor from Poona over the Sinhgad range through Saswad to the foot of Indra's hill.<sup>4</sup> Thence a wide bridle path enabled him to walk or ride comfortably to a narrow plateau some 1,300 feet above the plain. A carriage-road led round the hill, past the barracks and hospital, the bungalows and offices. A little church embowered in roses gave the English stranger

<sup>1</sup> The only royal murder in Maratha history was that of Narayan Rao Peshwa by his uncle Raghunath Rao.

<sup>2</sup> *Shedgavkar Bakhar*. See also *Khafi Khan*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 271.

<sup>3</sup> *Sabhasad Bakhar*.

<sup>4</sup> Purandar, as I have said, is another name for Indra.

a surprise, so closely did it resemble a house of prayer in some far-off Surrey village. From the south a path climbed 400 feet to the summit of Purandar, whence could be seen the entire Saswad plateau. To the north-east stood a peak half a mile, as the crow flies, from the top of Purandar. It was easily accessible and formed a convenient spot for teas or picnic parties.

In Shivaji's time the ledge on which to-day stand bungalows and barracks was the lower fort. On the summit of Purandar was the upper fort or citadel. The peak to the north-east was known as Rudra Mal or 'the Rosary of Shiva' and formed a separate fort. It added nothing to the strength of Purandar. But as it completely commanded the lower fort and partly commanded the upper fort, it had to be defended. It was strongly fortified and long walls enabled the garrison to retire on Purandar, if too hardly pressed. In 1665, Shivaji had appointed as commandant of Purandar one Murar Baji, a Prabhu and therefore of the same caste as Baji Deshpande, the hero of the rearguard action near Vishalgad. He had with him a force of 1,000 men, but a great number of peasants from the surrounding districts had fled to the fort for refuge. A separate force garrisoned Rudra Mal. The defenders, animated by Murar's spirit, offered a most stout resistance. Diler Khan, however, exploded a mine under one of the bastions of the lower fort and carried it immediately afterwards. The storming party, led away by their success, attempted in their onset to rush the upper fort also. Murar Baji instantly counter-attacked. With 700 men he charged down the hill-side, killing no less than 500 Afghan infantry, and drove the besiegers in headlong flight to the foot of the hill, where Diler Khan from the back of an elephant was watching the attack. The latter with great coolness shot Murar Baji through the body. Thereupon, the garrison, after a loss of 300 men, retreated to the upper fort. Not long afterwards, Diler Khan obtained a further success by scaling Rudra Mal.

Shivaji now became seriously alarmed. He had long been accustomed to consult Bhavani, the patron goddess of his house. And lately he had employed one Balaji Abaji, a Prabhu refugee from Janjira, to record words which he spoke when, as he believed, he was inspired by the divinity. On this momentous occasion he again asked the advice of Bhavani, and passing into a trance spoke as if repeating her instructions. Balaji Abaji recorded the divine message. Its tenor<sup>1</sup> was that Jai Singh was a Hindu prince and that he could not be overthrown like Afzul Khan or Shaistekhan. Shivaji should, therefore, make terms with him. Though danger might await him, yet he should fear nothing, for through it all Bhavani would protect him. Shivaji, after waking from the trance and consulting with his councillors and his mother, resolved to send an envoy to Jai Singh and sue for peace. Shivaji's conduct on this occasion has been discussed both by Grant Duff and by Ranade. The former has surmised that he was actuated by superstition. Ranade attributes it to some deep-laid scheme still undiscovered. The real reason was, I think,

the following. Shivaji remembered that his father Shahaji<sup>1</sup> had separately fought with success both Moghuls and Bijapur. Combined they had overthrown him. Shivaji had for this reason avoided hostility with Delhi until he had made terms with Bijapur. Trusting in Ali Adil Shah's honour, he had then attacked the Moghuls. But as the recent invasion of the Konkan showed, the Bijapur king was not to be trusted. He was now in league with Aurangzib and was endeavouring to recover his lost possessions. Shivaji therefore resolved to make peace with the Moghuls, and with their help so to reduce the power of Bijapur that never again would its intervention against him be of any consequence.

Shivaji sent messengers to Raja Jai Singh, as a brother Hindu asking for terms. But the Rajput chief had no intention of being tricked—as Sidi Johar had been. He, therefore, answered Shivaji's message with civility, but never ceased to press the siege of Purandar or to devastate the enemy's possessions. At last Shivaji sent to Jai Singh his confidential minister, Raghunath Pant, who swore by the most binding oaths that this time his master really was in earnest (June 9, 1665). Jai Singh in the end believed him and desired that Shivaji should visit him. On his part he swore by the sacred *tulsi* plant that if Shivaji did so, not a hair of his head would be harmed. Shivaji was at this time at Raygad. On receiving Jai Singh's message he set out with 1,000 horse.<sup>1</sup> When he reached Jai Singh's tents, the latter sent a clerk with a body of armed Rajputs to inform him that if he was serious in his intention to surrender, he should enter; if not, he had better go back as he had come. Shivaji assured the clerk that he was really in earnest and the clerk conveyed his assurance to Jai Singh. Jai Singh accepted it and sent a messenger of suitable rank to receive his visitor. When Shivaji entered Jai Singh's tent, the Rajput chief rose and embraced him. He seated Shivaji on his right hand and repeatedly promised that he would not only guarantee his safety, but would win for him the emperor's pardon and favour. Shivaji on his part assured the Rajput that he had no other wish than to become an ally of the emperor. After some further conversation, it was agreed that Shivaji should at once visit Diler Khan, who was still trying hard to take Purandar. Indeed, he had lost all patience at the length and difficulties of the siege. He had torn off his turban and had sworn not to wear it again until the place fell.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, on hearing that Shivaji had opened with Jai Singh negotiations to which he had not been a party, Diler Khan, so the Marathi chroniclers maintain, flew into such a passion that he tore his own wrist with his teeth.<sup>3</sup> He, however, received Shivaji with courtesy and soon fell under the charm of his address. Diler Khan presented Shivaji with a sword,<sup>4</sup> which the latter with ready tact at once fastened round his

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff says that Shivaji was accompanied by a slender retinue. But both the *Shedgavkar* and *Sabhasad Bakhars* say that he took 1,000 men. It would have been dangerous to have taken less.

<sup>2</sup> *Sabhasad Bakhar*.

<sup>3</sup> *Sabhasad Bakhari; Shedgavkar Bakhari*.

was<sup>1</sup>. The interview closed with an exchange of compliments and an immediate truce. Purandar fort was surrendered to Diler Khan, but the garrison and the refugees were permitted to depart. The terms of the peace had still to be considered. What Jai Singh demanded was the surrender of all Shivaji's recent conquests from the Moghuls, all the territory which had once belonged to the Ahmadnagar kingdom and Shivaji's homage to the emperor for the rest of his estate. On the other hand Shivaji, although not ready to surrender all demanded of him, was yet willing to make great sacrifices, provided that he might have a free hand against Bijapur. Eventually it was agreed that Shivaji should evacuate his recent gains in Moghul territory and all the ancient Ahmadnagar forts and districts except twelve. Included in his session were Purandar and Sinhgad. He was to retain all his other conquests from Bijapur. In return for a large sum in cash payable in three instalments, he was permitted to collect the *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi*, that is to say, a fourth plus a tenth share of the government revenue of certain territories in Bijapur. Shivaji was, in addition, to assist Jai Singh in reducing Bijapur, and his son Sambhaji was to accept a command of 5,000 horse in the imperial service. These terms were submitted to Aurangzib for approval. And the emperor, after some harsh reflections on Shivaji's past conduct, graciously condescended to confirm them<sup>2</sup>.

## CHAPTER IX

### SHIVAJI AT AGRA

A D 1665 TO 1668

THE folly of which the Bijapur king had been guilty in breaking his treaty with Shivaji now became apparent. Aurangzib regarded Shivaji as little better than a hill bandit who was never likely to be formidable beyond the foothills of the Sahyadris. But the reduction of Bijapur and Golconda was the darling wish of his life. It had throughout been the policy of the Moghul emperors to destroy the Musulman kingdoms which had risen upon the ruin of the Afghan empire. They had previously been provinces of Delhi. They had revolted when the central power was weak. They should be recovered when the central power was once more strong. Akbar, with far smaller resources than Aurangzib, had overthrown the kingdoms of Gujarat,

<sup>1</sup> The sum of money amounted to 40,00,000 pagodas.

<sup>2</sup> Aurangzib's letter, see Appendix. There is great confusion about the number of forts surrendered. Grant Duff writes that Shivaji surrendered 20. Khafi Khan's number is 23. The *Sabhasad*, *Shedgavkar* and *Shivdigvijaya Bakhars* mention that he surrendered 27. All authorities agree that he retained 12 forts. But there is a slight difference as regards the names between Grant Duff and Aurangzib's letter. The *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* are not mentioned by the emperor. He probably did not understand their meaning. The terms occur in the *Shivdigvijaya Bakhars*.

Khandesh and Bengal. Shah Jehan had conquered Ahmadnagar. The conquest of Bijapur and Golconda would enable Aurangzib to overrun all southern India, until his frontiers everywhere reached the sea. He would then be free to guard with the whole strength of the empire the north-western passes against the barbarians of central Asia.

In spite, therefore, of the aid given by Ali Adil Shah to the Moghuls in their attack on Shivaji, Aurangzib ordered Jai Singh and Diler Khan at once to invade Bijapur territory and, if possible, to storm the capital. Shivaji, with 2,000 horse and 8,000 or 9,000 infantry, joined the Moghul army (November, 1665). Considerable success at first attended the expedition. Shivaji attacked Phaltan, the fief of the Nimbalkars, his relatives, and soon reduced it, as well as the fort of Tathwada about ten miles to the south-east. He also made a successful night attack on the Bijapur forces in the Konkan. In the meantime, Jai Singh and Diler Khan moved on Bijapur itself. They met with no serious resistance until they came to Mangalvedha, a strong place about sixty miles north of Bijapur. It was gallantly defended, but fell after a week's siege<sup>1</sup>.

Diler Khan and Jai Singh now began to draw their troops round Bijapur and to hold high hopes that it would soon capitulate. But Ali Adil Shah rose to the height of the danger. His light horse spread out in every direction to invade the Moghul territories and to cut the communications of the besiegers. He had the wells for miles round Bijapur poisoned, and all stores and food supplies likely to fall into Moghul hands destroyed. At the same time he appealed to the king of Golconda to send him reinforcements.

Shivaji, after the fall of Phaltan and Tathwada, moved southwards and took a number of minor forts. While so engaged, he received from the emperor a letter,<sup>2</sup> in which he expressed his appreciation of Shivaji's gallantry and informed Shivaji that he had sent him a jewelled sword. Encouraged by this praise and his own recent successes, Shivaji invested Panhala. But the investment proved a failure. The garrison inflicted on the besiegers such a serious check that they raised the siege and fell back upon Vishalgad. While there, Shivaji received a second letter from the emperor. In it Aurangzib invited the Maratha prince to court, promising him leave to return home when he wished. At the same time Aurangzib again expressed his appreciation of his recent services and informed Shivaji that he had sent him a dress of honour<sup>3</sup>.

Shivaji sought the advice of Bhavani, and again the words spoken by her through Shivaji's mouth and recorded by Balaji Abaji were favourable. Ramdas<sup>4</sup> also advised Shivaji to go to court and thus to remove all suspicions from Aurangzib's mind. Shivaji, after some further consideration, decided that he would accept the emperor's invitation. He left his state in the hands of his mother Jijabai, Moro

<sup>1</sup> *Khafi Khan*.

<sup>2</sup> Original letter from Aurangzib; see Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix.

<sup>4</sup> *Shivdurgirajya Bakhar*.



Pingle the Peshwa, Nilopant Sondev and Anraji Datto.<sup>1</sup> To Jijabai was also entrusted the care of Shivaji's wives and of his second son Rajaram. Sambhaji was to go with his father and among Shivaji's attendants were Raghunathpant Korde, Kadtoji Guzar, Trimbakpant Dabir, Hiraji Pharzand, Balaji Abaji, Yesaji Kank and Tanaji Malusare.<sup>2</sup> Shivaji took with him also 1,000 infantry and 3,000 horse. He first went to Jai Singh's camp near Bijapur.<sup>3</sup> The Rajput general received him cordially and, when bidding him good-bye, sent with him his own son Ramsingh. Jai Singh told Ramsingh that he had guaranteed Shivaji's safety and that as Ramsingh valued his father's word, he was to help Shivaji to the utmost if he fell into any kind of danger. On the journey north, Shivaji was constantly thrown into the young prince's company, and long before it had ended, Ramsingh was Shivaji's devoted friend.

Some weeks of travel brought the party to the neighbourhood of Agra. There Shivaji halted and despatched Ramsingh to inform the emperor that Shivaji was awaiting his pleasure. When Ramsingh returned, he conveyed to Shivaji Aurangzib's wish that his guest should at once proceed to court. Shivaji had been led by Raja Jai Singh to expect that an officer of high rank would be sent to invite him to Agra. But the only officer who accompanied Ramsingh on his return was one Mukhlis Khan, a court official of little or no standing. Nevertheless Shivaji said nothing, but started with his escort. On reaching Agra he was given an audience (May 12, 1666).<sup>4</sup> He presented a *nazar* or offering of Rs. 30,000. The emperor then ordered him to take his place among commanders of 5,000 horse. This was a deliberate insult. Shivaji had recently taken the field with 10,000 men, and command of 5,000 horse had already been conferred on his son Sambhaji and on his subordinate Netaji Palkar. The Maratha prince saw that he was being maliciously flouted and, unable to control himself, turned to Ramsingh and spoke frankly his resentment. The young Rajput did his best to pacify him, but in vain. Aurangzib, who had no doubt hoped for some such incident, at once took advantage of it. He dismissed Shivaji without ceremony or return presents. He ordered him to be conducted to a house prepared for him near the Taj Mahal outside the city and to be informed that

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdnyaya Bakhar*

<sup>2</sup> *Shedgavkar Bakhar*

<sup>3</sup> Grant Duff and Ranade following the Marathi *bakhars* place the scene of Shivaji's detention at Delhi. With the utmost deference to these eminent writers, I think that they are wrong. Khafi Khan, who is fairly reliable as regards Moghul matters, places the scene at Agra. He is strongly supported by the original order of Shivaji in the Parasnis MSS., by which he rewarded Kashi Trimal and the mother of Krishnaji Vishvanath. It runs as follows:

'On leaving Agra, we left behind young Sambhaji, under the protection of Krishnaji Vishvanath.

The said gentleman had brought him safe to Raygad, and his mother and Kashi Trimal have accompanied Sambhaji to this place. We have therefore been pleased to pass an order to offer fifty thousand rupees as reward for the service. Rs. 25,000 to Kashi Trimal, Rs. 25,000 to the mother of Krishnaji Vishvanath (total Rs. 50,000) '.

the emperor had reported Shivaji's conduct to Jai Singh. Until Jai Singh's reply arrived, he was not to present himself at court. Shivaji's son Sambhaji, however, should do so, but as a retainer of Ramsingh. After Shivaji had reached his house, a strong guard under a Musulman officer named Polad Khan<sup>1</sup> was placed round it.

Shivaji was now in imminent peril. Any attempt to escape would give the emperor the desired excuse to behead him. On the other hand, if Shivaji made no such attempt, he would probably remain a state prisoner for the rest of his life. Shivaji first resolved to appeal to Aurangzib's honour. He sent Raghunathpant Korde with a petition to the emperor. Therein he reminded Aurangzib of the safe conduct promised him and of the assurances of Raja Jai Singh. In return for freedom Shivaji undertook to assist in the conquest either of Golconda or Bijapur. Raghunathpant Korde was given an audience and he supported his master's letter with such eloquence as he could himself command. But a certain Jaffar Khan, whose wife was Shaistekhan's sister and who was, therefore, connected by marriage with the emperor's family, had in the interval made every endeavour to poison Aurangzib's mind against Shivaji by distorted stories of his encounters with Afzul Khan and Shaistekhan. Aurangzib dismissed Raghunathpant Korde with the cold answer that the matter would receive consideration. With a heavy heart Raghunathpant repeated the reply to his imprisoned master. The latter then wrote to his friend Ramsingh and begged him to intervene on his behalf.<sup>2</sup> Ramsingh generously undertook the dangerous duty, but met with no better success. The emperor told the Rajput that the matter was no longer any concern of his. Eventually Aurangzib sent a messenger to Shivaji to say that he could return to the Deccan, provided he left behind him his son Sambhaji as a hostage.

Had Shivaji accepted this condition he would have had either to sacrifice his eldest son, or to betray his countrymen. He declined it and began at once to consider all possible methods of escape. The same night he saw in a dream Bhavani who, so he fancied, told him that he need fear nothing.<sup>3</sup> She would provide not only for his safety, but also for that of his son. Comforted by this vision, Shivaji's resourceful mind soon evolved a plan which for ingenuity and daring has rarely been equalled. In pursuance of it, he sent a further petition to Aurangzib, in which he begged that he might at least send his troops back to the Deccan. The emperor was only too glad to consent to a proposal which robbed Shivaji of his only protectors. And if he felt any suspicions, they were skillfully soothed by Shivaji's conduct. After his troops had departed, Shivaji repeatedly said to Polad Khan that he now no longer wished to depart. The emperor provided for his comfort on a liberal scale. His residence at Agra enabled him to save money, and if he could obtain the emperor's leave he would send for his wives and mother to Agra also. These words were reported to Aurangzib by Polad Khan and the emperor smiled indulgently at

<sup>1</sup> He was a *kotwal* of Agra.

<sup>2</sup> *Sabhasad Bakhar.*

<sup>3</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar.*

what he deemed the petty avarice and mean spirit of the Deccan chief. Shivaji next asked leave to send his friends in Agra sweetmeats and choice dishes prepared in the Deccan manner.<sup>1</sup> The leave was given and Shivaji's friends gladly received the presents<sup>2</sup> and sent him similar gifts in return. Shivaji sent further presents and received further return gifts. Thus hardly a day passed without a stream of wicker-work baskets passing into or going out of the prisoner's door. At first Polad Khan had them all carefully examined. But gradually his vigilance relaxed and the guards daily let the baskets pass without troubling to examine them. Suddenly Shivaji announced himself ill. He complained of acute pain in the liver and spleen. He sent for the best doctors in Agra and they prescribed for him various remedies. At first they seemed to do the patient but little good. But in a few days Shivaji declared himself better and ordered that more baskets of sweetmeats should be prepared and sent to his friends, that they might rejoice with him at his recovery. He also bought three horses,<sup>3</sup> which he sent with some of his attendants along the Mathura road. They were, he gave out, to be given as presents to the Brahmans there, whose prayers to Krishna had won his recovery. That evening Shivaji and his son got each into a sweetmeat basket and their remaining followers, disguised as porters, carried them out. One only of his retinue, the faithful Hiraji Pharzand stayed behind.<sup>2</sup> He entered Shivaji's bed, and covered his head with muslin, but left exposed one of his hands upon which Shivaji had placed his own signet ring.<sup>3</sup>

Next morning Shivaji did not rise, and as there seemed a strange stillness about the house the guards entered it. They saw, so they thought, Shivaji lying on his bed ill with fever, while a boy massaged his legs. They went away satisfied that Shivaji had had a relapse. In the meantime Shivaji, Sambhaji and their attendants had made their way to the spot where the horses awaited them, and had ridden as fast as possible to Mathura. There they changed their dresses and assumed the garb of religious mendicants, with whom Mathura is at all times crowded. They sought shelter of three brothers Annaji, Kashiji and Visaji Trimal, who were brothers by marriage of Moro Pingle, Shivaji's Peshwa. They willingly agreed to take the fugitives to their house until such time as it might be convenient for them to continue their flight. By now, however, Shivaji's escape had become known. About midday Hiraji Pharzand had left Shivaji's bed, had dressed himself and, on the pretext of going shopping, had left the house with the boy who had massaged his legs. They went to Ramsingh's dwelling, informed him of what had happened and then started on foot to return to the Deccan.<sup>4</sup> Shivaji's house was now completely deserted and when the guards paid it another visit to satisfy themselves that he still lay on the cot, they found it empty. Polad Khan reported the escape to Aurangzib, who instantly sent orders to local officers everywhere to search for the missing prince. Once in

<sup>1</sup> *Khafz Khan.*<sup>2</sup> *Sabhasad Bakhar.*<sup>3</sup> *Sabhasad Bakhar*<sup>4</sup> *Khafz Khan*

Mathura he was all but caught. A Brahman priest overheard Shivaji,<sup>1</sup> as he sat with his companions on the banks of the Jamna, discuss with them the various roads that led to the Deccan and give them instructions as regards present expenditure. The priest addressed the little group, observing that their talk was strangely out of keeping with their ascetic dress. Fortunately a friendly priest named Krishnaji Vishvanath, whom the three brothers had won to Shivaji's service, silenced the curious questioner with a handsome present. And he, too, became a devoted adherent of the prince.

The emperor, failing to find Shivaji elsewhere, had given orders that a close search should be made for him among the mendicants of Mathura, for the garb of the mendicant has always been, and still is, the favourite disguise of the fugitive, whether criminal or political. It was, therefore, necessary for Shivaji to leave Mathura. But Sambhaji was too young to stand the fatigues of the journey. His presence, also, would add to the risk of detection. Shivaji left him behind with Krishnaji Vishvanath's mother.<sup>2</sup> He himself, with Krishnaji as his guide, started on his homeward journey. It was unsafe to take a direct route. So Shivaji and his guide made for Benares and went through the usual routine of worship followed by pilgrims to that famous shrine. From Benares they went to Allahabad and Gaya and thence to Bengal.<sup>3</sup> Then they turned back and journeyed to Indore. From Indore they went southwards until at last they came to a village which Shivaji's troops, enraged at his detention, had recently raided and sacked. They asked shelter of a farmer. He had suffered with the other villagers and had lost his crops and live stock. Nevertheless he shared what he had with the travel-worn mendicants. Next morning they left him and a few days later they were in Poona. It was free from Moghul troops. So Shivaji threw off his disguise and publicly announced his return.

The welcome which he received resembled that which six years before had awaited Charles II when he landed at Dover. The guns in every fortress of the Sahyadris boomed greeting to the well-loved leader. The common soldiers went mad with delight. The officers hastened in thousands to pay their respects and to hear from Shivaji's own lips his romantic story. From Poona, Shivaji rode in state to Raygad (December, 1666). There his mother clasped him to her bosom and resigned back to him the power entrusted to her and the other regents when he left for Agra. One thing was wanting to the joy of Jijabai and her son. Sambhaji was still exposed to danger. But not many weeks passed before he too reached home safe and well. After securely guiding Shivaji to Poona, Krishnaji Vishvanath returned to Mathura. Then taking with him his mother, Kashiji Trimal and Sambhaji, he once again began the long journey to Poona. The party journeyed without incident until they reached Ujjain. There a Musulman officer suspected that the handsome, highbred lad

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar.*

<sup>2</sup> Shivaji's letter, see Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar.*

might be Sambhaji and addressed him. He was baffled by Kashiji's coolness and devotion. 'The boy,' he said, 'is my son. But a short time ago my mother, my wife, my son and I started together on a pilgrimage to Allahabad. My mother died on the way, my wife fell ill at Allahabad and died also. I am now taking my orphan son back to my own village.' 'In that case,' retorted the Musulman, 'you will have no objection to eat with your son off the same plate.' Although for a Brahman to eat with a Maratha, no matter how highly born, was to break the caste law and to incur a costly penance, Kashiji did not hesitate. 'He and Sambhaji shared the same dish. And the Musulman officer, satisfied with the test, let the prisoner go. The party continued on foot as far as Rakshasabhuvan, a village on the banks of the Godavari. There they hired horses and rode with all speed to Raygad. Shivaji, overjoyed at his son's return, gave to each of the three brothers the title of Vishwasrao. He gave in addition to Kashiji Trimal an order for Rs 25,000 and a similar order to Krishnaji Vishvanath's mother. Nor did he fail to reward the hospitable villager of Malwa who, in spite of his own misfortunes, had yet extended a welcome to two wandering beggars.

Sambhaji safe, Shivaji was free to take revenge on the Moghuls. Their affairs in the Deccan had lately been going none too well. Ali Adil Shah's defence of Bijapur had roused the sympathy of the king of Golconda. And in answer to his rival's appeal for help, he had sent 6,000 cavalry and 25,000 infantry. They, with the Bijapur horse, so harassed the besiegers that they were soon in a worse plight than the Bijapur garrison. At last Jai Singh reported to the emperor that he could no longer continue the investment. At the same time he fell back on Dharur and awaited orders.<sup>1</sup> But Shivaji now entered the field. He recaptured the Konkan surrendered by him, and then began to overrun the Desh. Jai Singh saw his retreat threatened. He abandoned all the forts in the Desh except Lohgad, Sinhgad and Purandar and retreated to Aurangabad. The failure of Jai Singh's expedition and Ramsingh's suspected connivance with Shivaji's escape led the emperor to recall him. But the war-worn Rajput did not live to regain the capital. Death overtook him at Burhanpur as he travelled back to Delhi. (July 12, 1667). In place of the dead officer Aurangzib re-appointed his son, Prince Muazzim, as governor of the Deccan, and Jaswant Singh, Maharaja of Jodhpur, as his second-in-command. The new viceroy had but little capacity and no liking for war. Jaswant Singh had made Shivaji's acquaintance at Delhi, and like all those who passed under the wand of the magician, became the prince's enthusiastic admirer. Shivaji on his part was willing to make peace, provided that his old possessions were restored to him and that, as before, he was given a free hand against Bijapur. A treaty ensued very favourable to the Maratha leader (A.D. 1668). The emperor conferred on him the title of Raja, thus confirming the honour granted to Maloji by the Ahmadnagar king, and continued the *mansab* or command of 5,000 horse to Sambhaji. He restored to Shivaji his

<sup>1</sup> *Khafiz Khan.*

father's old fief of Poona, Chakan and Supa,<sup>1</sup> and the neighbouring forts except Sinhgad and Purandar. In lieu of his other claims on the old Ahmadnagar kingdom, Shivaji received a fief in Berar and, so it would seem, was allowed to retain the Konkan which he had recently reconquered. Shivaji, on the other hand, undertook to aid the Moghuls in a fresh attack upon Bijapur. In pursuance of their agreement Shivaji sent a fine body of horse under Kadtoji Guzar, now ennobled by the title Prataprao Guzar,<sup>2</sup> to join Prince Muazzim's army at Aurangabad. It does not, however, appear to have seen service. The Bijapur king, although he had forced Jai Singh to raise the siege, was heartily sick of the war and, with Shivaji once more an ally of the emperor, could hardly hope to repeat his recent successes. He sued for peace; and obtained it by giving up the fort of Sholapur and other territory yielding 180,000 pagodas. But he had also to satisfy the claims of Shivaji to *sardeshmukhi* and *chauth* which had been granted to him by Aurangzib in their first treaty. Ali Adil Shah commuted them for payment of 3½ lakhs of rupees. Shivaji was now more powerful than he had ever been. For a whole year he remained at peace with his neighbours and absorbed in the task of restoring order to his kingdom. Nor did he provoke the war that afterwards broke out. The cause was the fresh treachery of Aurangzib.

## CHAPTER X

### SINHGAD, SURAT AND SALHER

A D. 1668 TO 1672

AURANGZIB, whose besetting sin was mistrust of his subordinates, refused them his confidence either in war or in peace. He had never given Diler Khan or Raja Jai Singh sufficient troops either to destroy Shivaji or to take Bijapur. And now that Prince Muazzim and Shivaji lived on amicable terms, the jealous emperor came to suspect that they were plotting his overthrow. The suspicion had no foundation. Prince Muazzim hated war and Shivaji had no wish to attack the Moghuls until he had secured his southern frontier from the assaults of Bijapur. Nevertheless Aurangzib sent Prince Muazzim an order directing him to seize at once the persons of Shivaji and Prataprao Guzar. Prince Muazzim, before the order arrived, heard of it from his confidential agent at Delhi. He sent for Niraji Ravji, Shivaji's legate at Aurangabad and advised him to leave with Prataprao Guzar before the order came. Niraji Ravji at once conveyed the warning to Prataprao Guzar, and the same night the

<sup>1</sup> Ranade, p. 108. See also Aurangzib's original letter in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Shivaji at this period reduced Netoji Palkar and appointed Kadtoji Guzar as the commander of his cavalry. The reason is obscure. The *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 57, says, 'The king, finding fault with him (Netoji Palkar) for not having attended his call in time, removed him from his office as *Sarnobat* (cavalry commander)'.  
commander,

latter led his contingent out of Aurangabad and by forced marches reached Raygad in a few days. When the official letter of the emperor arrived, Prince Muazzim was with perfect truth able to answer that it was impossible to seize either Shivaji or Prataprao Guzar, as there was no longer a single Maratha at Aurangabad. Shivaji could hardly have been otherwise than angry at the news conveyed to him by Prataprao Guzar, but he concealed his anger under a show of satisfaction. 'The Moghuls,' he said laughing, 'have maintained my cavalry for two years at their own expense. I shall now show them how much my horses have profited by their care.'

The Moghul garrisons at Sinhgad and Purandar had long been an eyesore to Shivaji and to his mother. The recent treachery of Aurangzib showed him that it was impossible to remain at peace with the Moghuls. He, therefore, resolved to reduce the two great forts without further delay. A lively ballad has preserved a fantastic, but most interesting, account of the attack on Sinhgad. One Monday morning, according to the ballad writer, Shivaji was at Raygad.<sup>1</sup> His mother Jijabai was at Pratapgad. The latter was combing her hair with an ivory comb. As she looked eastwards, her eyes fell on Sinhgad. It was shining in the sun like a new-laid egg. The sight goaded her to fury. She told one of her servants to ride to Raygad and call Shivaji to her, even if he had to get up from his dinner without washing his hands. Shivaji at once obeyed his mother's summons, donned his armour, took his sword and shield and tiger claws, mounted his black mare Krishna and, riding as fast as he could to Pratapgad, announced his arrival to Jijabai. When they met he asked her the cause of her urgent message. She gave him no direct answer, but challenged him to a game of dice. Shivaji at first declined, saying that it was not right for a son to oppose his mother even in a game. But Jijabai overcame his scruples and then prayed to Bhavani for help. With the goddess' aid she won the match. Shivaji then begged his mother to take as a forfeit any one of the fortresses in his possession. She refused them all, but demanded Sinhgad.

The king protested that the renowned Ude Bhan defended it and that it was impregnable. But Jijabai insisted and threatened to burn up his kingdom with her curses unless he gave her Sinhgad. Shivaji perforce consented and told her to go with him to Rajgad. There he spent several hours thinking whom he should appoint to capture the fortress. At last the name of his old comrade Tanaji Malusare, *subhedar* of Umrath, occurred to him. He sent a written message to Tanaji, ordering him to be present at Rajgad within three days and accompanied by 12,000 men. The messenger found Tanaji engaged in preparing for the marriage of his son Rayaba. But the wedding was put off and with 12,000 men carrying clubs and sickles Tanaji started for Rajgad. As he went, a coppersmith bird flew across

<sup>1</sup> *Shedgavkar Bakhar*.

<sup>2</sup> *Shaligram Collection*, p. 21. The writer was Tulsidas Shahr.

<sup>3</sup> In the ballad he is declared to be at Rajgad. But, as the commentator rightly observes, the route followed by the messenger shows that he must have been at Raygad.

his path. His uncle Shelar urged him to return as the sight of such a bird was an evil omen. But Tanaji laughed at the old man's fears and continued his march. As they neared Rajgad, Jijabai thought that they were Moghuls and begged Shivaji to fire on them. But the king recognized his own banners and guessed that the troops were Tanaji's. Shivaji greeted Tanaji warmly. But the *subhedar*, with the freedom of an old friend, scolded the king for disturbing him in the middle of his son's marriage festivities. Shivaji excused himself, pleading that it was not really he but Jijabai who had sent for Tanaji. As her son spoke, Jijabai rose. She first thanked Bhavani for Tanaji's coming, then waved a lamp round Tanaji's head and cracked her fingers on her temple so as to take to herself all his cares.<sup>1</sup> Tanaji, completely won by the queen's acts, took off his turban, placed it at her feet, and promised to give her anything she wanted. She told him to give her Sinhgad and assured him that if he did so, she would regard him as Shivaji's younger brother and her own son. Tanaji gladly agreed to go forth on the perilous quest. Jijabai gave a feast of which his whole force partook and, as they ate, Bhavani herself came and helped to serve them. After the feast was over, Jijabai gave to Tanaji's soldiers clothes and weapons, and they started for Sinhgad. On reaching a spot called Anandi Bari, Tanaji assumed the dress of a village headman and stole through the jungle until he reached the enemy's outposts. They were Hindus of the Koli caste and seized him. He gave out that he was *patil*, or headman, of Sakhara and that he had just met a tiger and had fled to them for shelter. This satisfied the Kolis, whose hearts Tanaji soon won by presents of betel-nut and opium. Lastly, he distributed pieces of jewellery amongst them and confided to them that he was one of Shivaji's nobles and sought information about the fort. They readily told him all that they knew and a great deal more. Sinhgad, they said, had a perimeter of six miles.<sup>2</sup> It was defended by Ude Bhan and 1,800 Pathans and a number of Arabs. Ude Bhan was a tremendous warrior. He had no less than eighteen wives and ate at each meal one and a half cows, one and a half sheep and one and a quarter maunds of rice. He had a man-slaying elephant called Chandravali and a lieutenant called Sidi Hillo. The latter had nine wives and ate at each meal one sheep, half a cow and half a maund of rice. There were also Ude Bhan's twelve sons, all stronger than he himself was. Lastly, the Kolis gave Tanaji Malusare a really valuable piece of information, namely, that the right side of a cliff known as the Dongri Cliff could be escalated. When Tanaji heard this he rose and, promising handsome gifts to the Kolis if the fort was taken, he returned to his men. The same night Tanaji and the army went to the gate known as the Kalyan Gate. There Tanaji took out of a box Shivaji's famous *ghorpad* Yeshwant, which had already scaled 27 forts. He smeared its head with red lead, put a pearl ornament on its forehead and worshipped it as a god. He then tied a cord to its

<sup>1</sup> *Ala bala* This is a very common practice among Indian ladies.

<sup>2</sup> The perimeter is really under two miles.



waist and bade it run up the Dongri Cliff. Half way the *ghorpad* turned back. Shelar thought this an evil omen and urged Tanaji to abandon the enterprise. But Tanaji threatened to kill and eat the *ghorpad* if it did not do his bidding. Thereupon Yeshwant climbed to the top of the cliff and fastened its claws in the ground. Tanaji then led the escalade. With their swords in their teeth, he and fifty men after him climbed up the rope. When these had reached the summit, so great was the rush of their comrades to climb up also, that the rope broke. The fifty men on the top of the fort were now in a desperate position and would have tried to jump down its sides. But Tanaji kept his head and bade them follow him and surprise the guards. The party crawled to the Kalyan Gate and noiselessly killed the Arabs guarding it. They then crawled to the second gate, where they killed 300 Pathans, and a third gate where they killed 400 Pathans. One, however, escaped and told Ude Bhan. The latter had just drunk eighteen cups of wine, had eaten several balls of opium and was about to seek the embraces of his wives. In spite of the urgency of the occasion, he refused to go himself, but ordered that his elephant Chandravali should be sent against the enemy. Its mahout gave the monster an incredible quantity of *bhang* and opium and drove it against Tanaji. The latter, however, evaded its charge and springing on its back killed it by cutting off its trunk with a single sword stroke. Ude Bhan next sent Sidi Hillal to meet the enemy. Sidi Hillal donned his armour and, killing his nine wives,<sup>1</sup> marked his forehead with their blood and then sought out Tanaji. On meeting him Sidi Hillal bade him take grass in his mouth, put his sandals on his head and beg for mercy. Tanaji refused and, after warding off eighteen successive sword cuts, clove the Sidi open from the turban to the navel. Ude Bhan, however, still refused to leave his wives. He ordered his twelve sons to go forth to battle. But they were no more fortunate than their forerunners. Twelve strokes of Tanaji's sword cut them into twenty-four pieces. His sons' death at last roused Ude Bhan. He cut down his wives just as Sidi Hillal had done and, rallying the rest of the garrison, he went towards the Kalyan Gate. Seeing that the storming party only numbered fifty, Ude Bhan and his Pathans rushed at them. Ude Bhan cut down Tanaji. But Shelar avenged his death by instantly killing Ude Bhan. Nevertheless the small Maratha force would soon have been overpowered, had not Bhavani of Pratapgad flung open with her own hand the Kalyan Gate, thus enabling Suryaji, Tanaji's brother, and the rest of the 12,000 men to enter the fort. The fight was then soon over. The garrison was killed. The imperial standard was torn down. Shivaji's banner was hoisted in its place. Five cannons were fired and some buildings set alight to announce to Shivaji that Singhgad was his. Shivaji hastened from Rajgad and mounted the steep path that leads up Singhgad. He entered the fort through the Kalyan Gate and rode until he saw the corpse of his gallant comrade Tanaji Malusare. As the king stopped to gaze at it, his soldiers crowded round him to congratulate him on the capture of

<sup>1</sup> He killed his wives to safeguard their honour in case he did not return.

the 'lion's fort'.<sup>1</sup> But he silenced them with a bitter laconism such as Julius would have envied. 'I have got the Fort,' he said, 'but I have lost the lion' (February 17, 1670).<sup>2</sup>

The fall of Sinhgad was followed by that of Purandar, escalated by Suryaji Malusare; and between February and June 1670, the Peshwa, aided by Nilopant Sondev and Annaji Datto, had removed every trace of the Moghul occupation from Shivaji's territories. The king next tried to surprise Shivner, the great fort near Junnar. He had been born there and he had long desired to win it, that he might thereby secure his northern frontier. In this enterprise his good fortune deserted him. When the leader of the storming party reached the summit of the fort, he was seen by one of the wives of the garrison. She flung a stone at him, which knocked him over backwards. As he fell he overturned those who followed him. And the noise of their fall roused the garrison who cut the ropes to which the storming party clung and thus repulsed the attack with heavy loss.

After this failure Shivaji turned once more to Janjira. He took all the bridge-heads which Fatih Khan had established on the mainland and drove him and such forces as he still had with him back into the island. These defeats weighed heavily on Fatih Khan's mind. It was hopeless for him to expect aid from Bijapur, separated as it and Janjira were by Shivaji's possessions. Shivaji's fleet too was by now more than a match for Fatih Khan's ships and, attacked by land and sea, he despaired of a successful defence. He therefore opened negotiations with Shivaji, offering to surrender Janjira, provided that he and his garrison were allowed to go free. Shivaji wished at any cost to secure this powerful naval base and he readily agreed to Fatih Khan's terms. But the latter's design was frustrated when on the very point of execution. As I have previously related, the governors of the island, when it was under the kings of Ahmadnagar, were Abyssinian kinsmen or friends of Malik Ambar. Upon its transfer to Bijapur they became Fatih Khan's subordinates. Hearing of his treason, they resolved both to save Janjira from the infidel and to rid themselves of their Afghan superior. Their three leaders were named Sidi Sambal, Sidi Yakut and Sidi Kharyat. They suddenly seized Fatih Khan and put him in chains. They sent a despatch explaining to the Bijapur king their conduct. At the same time they sent another despatch to Aurangabad offering in return for aid from the Moghul fleet to hold Janjira as a dependency of Delhi. The Moghuls gladly consented and the Surat fleet relieved Janjira by joining the Sidi's fleet, which thus recovered command of the sea.

<sup>1</sup> 'Sinh' means lion and 'gad' fort. The Marathi words of Shivaji were, *Gad ala, pan Sinh gela*.

<sup>2</sup> A less romantic, but more probable, story is to be found in the *Sabhasad Bakhar*. According to the author of that chronicle, Tanaji and his brother Suryaji surprised Sinhgad without divine assistance and with a force of only a thousand Mawal infantry. The garrison consisted of seven hundred Rajputs who defended themselves gallantly, until over five hundred had been killed or wounded in the attack.

<sup>3</sup> Fryer, *Eastern Travels*.

It was characteristic of Shivaji that adversity seemed to stimulate his mind and that brilliant successes closely followed his gravest disasters.\* During the last six years the town of Surat had recovered its prosperity. Yet in spite of the Maratha raid of 1664, the Moghul government had taken no steps to prevent its repetition. Shivaji resolved to profit by their negligence and to make Surat pay for the aid given to Janjira by the Moghul fleet that had sailed from the Tapti. On October 1, 1670, news reached Surat that a Maratha army 15,000 strong had entered Gujarat, and two days later its vanguard was seen to approach the mud walls. The inhabitants fled, as before, to the surrounding villages and the governor and his garrison repeated their former cowardice by at once retiring to the castle. The English, Dutch and French merchants got ready to defend their factories, and the guards of two seraglios, one maintained by Persian and Turkish merchants and another by a fugitive prince from Kashgar,<sup>1</sup> resolutely prepared to protect their charges. The rest of the city was abandoned as before to Maratha plunderers. Shivaji, however, thought that the Kashgar prince's seraglio would be worth capture. As it stood close to the French factory, the Marathas made a continued attack on both. The French resisted gallantly for some time, but learning that the Marathas chiefly desired a passage to the prince's harem, they agreed to allow it in return for their own safety. Shivaji now attacked the seraglio from all sides until dark, but without carrying it. During the night the Kashgar prince took fright and fled with his servants, women and portable treasure to the castle. But he was forced to leave behind a vast store of gold and silver plate and handsome furniture, which next day was taken by the Marathas. A body of troops had tried on the previous day to storm the English factory, but had been repulsed by the gallantry of the factors led by Streinsham Master. A fresh attempt was made by the Marathas on October 4, but again without result. The Marathas then proceeded to pillage the town, while the garrison did nothing but fire into it from the castle, setting fire to a number of houses. On October 5, a Maratha force for a third time appeared before the English factory and warned Streinsham Master that unless the garrison made their submission by sending Shivaji a present, the king would consider it incumbent on his honour to storm the place. The English, who had no wish to drive the king to extremities, gladly agreed to send him a peace offering. The two Englishmen entrusted with it were led to Shivaji's tent outside the town. The king received them, according to their own account, with the greatest courtesy. He took their hands in his and told them that he regarded the English as his best friends and that he would never do them any harm.<sup>2</sup> The same evening Shivaji withdrew his army laden with booty. But before he left he sent a

<sup>1</sup> This account is taken from the English letter of November 20 preserved in Hedge's *Diary*, Vol. II, p. 226. The prince of Kashgar is said to have been connected with Aurangzib and to have been dethroned by his own son.

<sup>2</sup> The Company were so pleased with Master's daring and prudence that they struck a medal to commemorate the incident.

letter to the principal merchants, in which he informed them that unless they paid him an annual tribute of 12 lakhs he would return and burn Surat to the ground. At the time of his first raid Shivaji had returned to the Konkan through Dharampur. This time, confident in the number of his troops, he followed the main road from Surat to Aurangabad, which passed by Salher fort and Chandwad town. At Chandwad he proposed to leave the main road and return<sup>1</sup> through the Nasik pass to the Konkan. But the news of his raid on Surat and of his line of retreat had reached Aurangabad. A body of Moghul cavalry under Daud Khan set out to harass his rearguard, while a large Moghul army marched to the Sahyadris and blocked the Nasik pass. The plan, both well-conceived and well-executed, failed through the excellence of Shivaji's information. He sent his plunder through other passes in the mountains, and then turning with a body of horse on Daud Khan's cavalry overwhelmed it at Khadase. Returning swiftly, he charged with his whole army the Moghuls who held the Nasik pass and completely routed them. He then led his troops and treasure safely to Raygad.

With the spoil of Surat Shivaji equipped 30,000 fresh troops and a powerful fleet. With the latter he made a demonstration along the Gujarat coast as far as Broach. The Moghuls, anticipating a raid on Broach similar to that twice made on Surat, sent all their available reinforcements into Gujarat. This was what Shivaji had desired and he now led an army into Khandesh. The garrisons of the Khandesh towns fought with great courage, but they were separately defeated. The forts of Aundha, Patta, Trimbak and Salher fell and Shivaji laid waste the whole of the fertile province as far as Burhanpur on its north-eastern frontier. While Shivaji overran Khandesh, Moro Pingle descended through the Nasik pass, reduced the Jawhar State and exacted contributions from the Kolwan, now the northern part of the Thana district (January, 1671). Shivaji then fell back upon the Sahyadri mountains. But as he did so, he made the headman of every village undertake to pay him a fourth of the revenue as a safeguard against further attack. Thus was the *chauth* imposed for the first time on a Moghul province. These disasters to the Moghul arms led to a change in the Aurangabad government. The emperor recalled Jaswant Singh and in his place he sent Mahabat Khan, the veteran officer who had conquered Daulatabad for the Emperor Shah Jehan, together with a new army of 40,000 men. The Moghuls now re-assumed the offensive. They at first met with some success. They re-captured Aundha and Patta before the monsoon broke, and early in the next year (1672) they invested Salher and cut to pieces a body of horse<sup>2</sup> sent by Moropant Pingle to reinforce the garrison. Shivaji ordered Moropant Pingle and Prataprao Guzar to proceed in person with all their available troops to relieve Salher. Mahabat Khan sent the greater part of his army under one Iklas Khan to attack the

<sup>1</sup> See *Sabhasad* and *Shedgavkar Bakhars* and Scott, *Deccan*, Vol II, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Sabhasad Bakhars*. The *Bakhar* gives the number as 1000. Grant Duff estimates it at 2000.

relieving force as it approached the fort. The Marathas were advancing in two columns, Prataprao Guzar on the west of Salher and Motopant Pingle on the east. Iklas Khan tried to prevent their junction by throwing himself between them and 'destroying them one after the other. The plan failed. But the Moghuls with the utmost courage fought a confused running battle of which the result was long doubtful. After twelve hours the superior mobility and numbers of the Maratha horse prevailed. They joined in the centre, and there holding Iklas Khan, turned both his flanks. A last vigorous charge completed the Moghul defeat. Only 2,000 men, with Iklas Khan and his lieutenant Bahlol Khan, escaped from the rout. The rest of the Moghul army, about 20,000 strong, either fell on the field or surrendered. 6,000 horses, 125 elephants and a vast spoil of jewels and treasure became the prize of the conquerors.<sup>1</sup> But the gain in prestige was greater still. For the first time the Marathas had won a pitched battle against a disciplined Moghul army, led by a soldier trained in the school of Akbar and Shah Jehan. Deserters from Bijapur and Delhi and recruits from all parts of the country flocked in thousands to the standard of the king. To continue the siege of Salher was now hopeless and Mahabat Khan retired with his shattered army behind the bastions of Aurangabad.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE CROWNING OF SHIVAJI

A.D. 1672 TO 1674

AFTER sixty years of miserable servitude to Castile, the Portuguese nation rallied round the Duke of Braganza and with French aid and their own courage achieved their independence. To secure it they entered into a marriage connexion with the royal house of Stuart. In 1661, Charles II, who had just won back the throne of England, married Princess Catherine of Portugal. As a dowry to his daughter, the Portuguese king gave Tangier on the north-west coast of Africa and the fort and island of Bombay on the west coast of India. To the Lisbon government the dowry seemed a small one. Tangier proved a death trap to the English soldiers who guarded it. The island of Bombay was a low-lying group of rocks off the Konkan coast. Only eleven Portuguese families resided there<sup>2</sup> and seventy 'Mosquiteers' or armed Indian Police were deemed a sufficient garrison. But it formed a magnificent refuge for ships, by affording them a shelter from the fury of the south-west monsoon. And the Portuguese viceroy, De la

<sup>1</sup> I have based my account of the battle of Salher on the *Sabhasad Bakhar*. Grant Duff's account is somewhat different. On Shivaji's side Suryajirao Kakde, a distinguished soldier, fell. To the wounded prisoners Shivaji behaved with great humanity. He tended their wounds and, when well, dismissed them with presents.

<sup>2</sup> See Malabari, *Bombay in the Making*, p. 93.

Costa, with prophetic truth wrote to his king that the Indian empire would be lost to his nation from the day that the English landed on the island. At first, it is true, the cession did England but little good and the quarrels between the English governor and the Portuguese viceroy as to the interpretation of the grant caused Charles II in a fit of vexation to transfer on March 27, 1668, Bombay to the East India Company.

Although it was not until 1674 that the wise and chivalrous Gerald Aungier transferred the headquarters of the Company from Surat to Bombay, the acquisition of the island drew the English, almost at once, into the sphere of Indian politics. At Surat they had wasted little thought on matters other than bills of lading or books of accounts. Even the seizure of their factors at Rajapur and Shivaji's two attacks on Surat disturbed but for the moment the even tenor of their lives. Now the possession of the Bombay harbour with its great advantages as a naval base made their alliance desirable both to the Moghuls and to Shivaji. Shivaji passed the monsoon of 1672 in improving his conquests in the Kolwan and in forcing the Koli chiefs to pass treaties and to promise contingents when needed. He also demanded tribute from the Portuguese settlements at Daman and Salsette. The Portuguese refused, and a body of Marathas tried to surprise the fort of Ghodbunder on Salsette island, still a Portuguese possession. The Portuguese repulsed them. But the attack alarmed the English factors, who began to fortify their new acquisition and to beg Shivaji to enter into a treaty with them. Shivaji in reply pressed them to join him against Janjira and with their ships to help him destroy the Sidi's fleet. The English explained that the presence of their factory at Surat forced them to keep neutral. Shivaji then bade them return to Rajapur and re-establish their settlement there. But the English insisted that, before they did so, he should indemnify them for their previous losses there. This Shivaji refused to do, and for the time the negotiations fell through.

The disaster of Salher had caused intense irritation to Aurangzib. He at once recalled Mahabat Khan and Prince Muazzim and appointed Bahadur Khan Koka, afterwards known as Khan Jahan Bahadur, and then governor of Gujarat, to be viceroy of the Deccan with Diler Khan as his second-in-command. The new governor soon proved himself quite unfit for the post. In spite of Diler Khan's advice, he gave up all offensive operations against the Marathas and tried to bar their entrance into Khandesh by a chain of blockhouses along the Western Ghats.<sup>1</sup> The Marathas, however, turned aside from Khandesh and overran the country between Ahmadnagar and Aurangabad. The viceroy pursued them from place to place, but was always too late to catch them. In fact so imbecile was his conduct that Shivaji was led to disregard him entirely. And while part of his army plundered the Moghul territories, he engaged with the rest in a distant and profitable expedition.

<sup>1</sup> Scott, *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 33. The Persian author gives the names of the places where Bahadur Khan built blockhouses.

While the English and the Dutch merchants at Surat had worked up their trade on business lines and had thereby made considerable profits, the French had not been so successful. Their factory, founded in 1642, was equipped on too lavish a scale to yield any return. At last M de la Haye thought that an establishment on the Coromandel Coast might bring him more profit. Close to the site of modern Madras was the little town of St Thomé. It had once been a Portuguese settlement, but in 1669 the king of Golconda had taken it by storm. De la Haye raided it from the sea and drove out the Golconda garrison. The Golconda king equipped an army and sent it to recover the little fort. When his forces were well on the way to the Coromandel Coast, Shivaji appeared with a large Maratha force at the gates of Hyderabad. Resistance was useless and the Golconda king was obliged to ransom his chief town by the immediate payment of two million pagodas. Shivaji then returned with his usual expedition to Raygad. In his absence, however, another mishap had befallen him at Janjira.

Sidi Sambal had died shortly after the overthrow of Fath Khan<sup>1</sup> and been succeeded as governor by Sidi Yakut (A.D. 1672). The new governor was a man of enterprise and ability and his ships constantly captured Maratha vessels and sent the heads of their sailors to Aurangabad. Hearing of Shivaji's absence, he again asked Bahadur Khan for the aid of the Moghul fleet. The latter consented and begged leave of the English<sup>2</sup> to let his fleet drop anchor in Bombay so that the Moghul troops might land and attack Shivaji's neighbouring possessions. The king's agent warned the English that if they consented, it would mean war with his master and the certain loss of Bombay. The English placed their difficulties before Bahadur Khan and informed him that they were but merchants and could not take sides with either of the contending governments. The Moghuls then pretended to give up their project in disgust. But a little time after returning to Surat, they set out for a cruise. Suddenly altering their course they entered the port of Danda Rajpuri. There they destroyed a number of Shivaji's ships and took 200 Maratha sailors. These Sidi Yakut tied to stones and flung overboard. He then attacked Danda Rajpuri itself. This fortress, which Shivaji had conquered from Fath Khan, was of the utmost value to the garrison of Janjira. Without it the garrison ran a great risk of being starved out. With it as a bridge-head, they commanded a large stretch of fertile country. One night Sidi Yakut sent Sidi Khairyat, his second-in-command, to attack Danda Rajpuri from the land side, while he himself led a force in boats to attack it from the sea. The commandant was Ragho Ballal Atre who had killed Chandra Rao More at Jaoli. Usually an efficient soldier, he allowed his vigilance to relax in the celebration of the Holi.<sup>3</sup> Surprised by Sidi Khairyat's party, he summoned the whole garrison to repel it. Sidi Yakut in the meantime swiftly climbed the unprotected western wall of the fortress. The garrison, taken

<sup>1</sup> *Khafz Khan*

<sup>2</sup> Orme, *Historical Fragments*, pp. 30-1.

<sup>3</sup> *Khafz Khan*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 290.

between two fires, were overpowered and mercilessly massacred. Following up this success Sidi Yakut attacked six or seven minor forts in the neighbourhood. All but one succumbed to the first assault. One held out for a few days in hope of succour. At last, greatly distressed, and tempted by Sidi Yakut's oath that he would spare the garrison, the commandant surrendered. Sidi Yakut then did what Shivaji would never have done. He broke his word and inhumanly put to death every male in the place, whether armed or not. Forcibly converting the young women and the children to Islam, he reduced them to slavery. Only the old women were permitted to return to their homes.

On December 15, 1672, Ali Adil Shah, the king of Bijapur, died. The state had suffered greatly during his reign. The Moghuls had taken all its territories north of the Bhima river. Shivaji had conquered the Konkan as far south as Phonda and the western *desh* or plateau to the east of the Sahyadris. Ali Adil Shah had, it is true, reduced a number of petty chiefs who had made themselves independent upon the fall of Vijayanagar, and had pushed his frontier far to the south. But these conquests, in the decaying condition of the central government, weakened rather than strengthened its power. Latterly Shivaji in return for an annual payment of three lakhs had abstained from invasion, but now that Ali Adil Shah, with whom he had made the treaty, was dead, the Maratha king held himself absolved from his engagements. In this view he was no doubt confirmed by his agents' reports of the state of Bijapur, where reigned faction and discord. In March 1673, he collected a large force at Vishalgad and retook Panhala which had been in the power of the Bijapur king ever since its capture by Sidi Johar. But the main object of the expedition was the plunder of the rich town of Hubli to the south-east of Dharwar. During the prosperous days of the Bijapur kingdom, Hubli had been a great mercantile emporium and renowned for the manufacture of cloth. The English company had stationed a broker there in order to buy cloth specially intended for sale in England. The Maratha vanguard under Annaji Datto surprised and routed the Bijapur garrison and the plunder exceeded even that of Surat. From the English depot alone cloth worth nearly £3,000 was taken, and when the Maratha army had left, the Bijapur garrison returning completed the ruin of the town. The English demanded compensation, but Shivaji maintained that his troops had spared their storehouse and assessed their losses at £70 only. The English at Bombay were naturally indignant and they soon had an opportunity of putting pressure on the king. In May 1673, the Moghul fleet appeared off Bombay and again asked leave of the English to spend the monsoon in the harbour. Had the English consented, the Moghul fleet would have been in a position to raid any point it pleased on Shivaji's coast. Gerald Aungier brought this to Shivaji's notice and pressed for compensation for the raids on Rajapur and Hubli. But the damage done to the English at Hubli seems not to have been communicated by Annaji Datto, the Maratha commander, to his master; for Shivaji maintained to the last that it did not exceed 200 pagodas. He declined, therefore, to settle the Hubli claim but promised to pay the



Rajapur claim, provided that the English again settled at Rajapur. To this they agreed; but they evaded the Maratha king's demand to furnish him with cannon. While thus negotiating with Shivaji, Gerald Aungier managed with great dexterity not to offend the Moghuls. He allowed four of their frigates to take shelter in Bombay harbour, and the rest of the Moghul fleet returned to Surat.

During the monsoon of 1673,<sup>1</sup> the Bijapur governor of Karwar, the capital of the modern collectorate of North Kanara, revolted and plundered both the Portuguese and the English. This enabled the Maratha king to increase the confusion of the wretched Bijapur kingdom. He wished, however, to remain for the time being at peace with the Moghuls. He, therefore, sent large sums of money to Bahadur Khan to ensure his neutrality. He then attacked Bijapur by land and sea. His navy anchored at Karwar and landed a strong detachment of Maratha troops. They drove out the rebel governor, plundered Ankola and Karwar, and compelled the Raja of Bednur to bind himself to pay an annual tribute to Shivaji. At the same time a land force operating from the Jaoli district surprised Parali, a fort six miles south-west of Satara, and afterwards took Satara, Chandan, Wandan, Pandavgad, Nandgiri, Tathwada, the line of forts between Satara and Phaltan captured by Shivaji for Aurangzib and restored by him to Bijapur by the treaty of 1668. When the rains had ceased, Shivaji went in person to attack Phonda which blocked his communications with Karwar and Ankola. Phonda had been the last refuge of the Savants and had again fallen into the hands of Bijapur. It was now stoutly defended by a Musulman garrison. While Shivaji was vainly trying to overcome their resistance, the Moghul fleet ventured out from the Surat harbour. On October 10,<sup>2</sup> the Sidi entered Bombay harbour, and disregarding the protests of Gerald Aungier, who drew his supplies from that part of the mainland, landed at the mouth of the river Pen and laid waste the adjoining country. The Marathas, after expostulating with Aungier for allowing the Moghuls to land, first surprised and cut to pieces a detachment of Moghuls and afterwards defeated the main body in a pitched battle. The Abyssinian then withdrew his men and returned to Surat where he gave so flowery an account of his feat of arms that he received a handsome money reward.

The long defence of Phonda encouraged the Bijapur government to try by a counter-attack to regain Panhala, a most valuable bridge-head from which to make raids on Shivaji's territory. They ordered Abdul Karim, the viceroy of the western province of Bijapur, to advance on Panhala. Shivaji at once detached Prataprao Guzar to plunder the country on his line of communications. This Prataprao Guzar did so successfully that Abdul Karim fell back towards the capital. The two armies met at Umbrani between Miraj and Bijapur. Prataprao's cavalry soon turned both of Abdul Karim's flanks. By sunset the latter was in so critical a position that he sent an envoy to Prataprao Guzar, undertaking to abstain absolutely from any

<sup>1</sup> Orme, *Historical Fragments*.

*Ibid.*

hostilities against the Marathas and to permit them to plunder his viceroyalty at will, provided they allowed him now to retire unmolested. Prataprao Guzar, a gallant and enterprising soldier, but not a diplomat, was fooled by the humble promises of his enemy. He should have guessed that it was not in Abdul Karim's power to keep them. If ordered to attack the Marathas, he would be bound to do so or resign his post. Nevertheless Prataprao allowed Abdul Karim and his army to escape. Shivaji, on hearing the news, grew extremely angry. He censured Prataprao Guzar severely. The latter, in a fit of insubordination,<sup>1</sup> led his cavalry on a raiding expedition through the heart of the Aurangabad provinces as far as the frontiers of Berar, thus breaking Shivaji's truce with the Moghul viceroy, Bahadur Khan. Nor did Abdul Karim keep his compact with Prataprao. He had no sooner reached Bijapur, than he recruited another army and again advanced on Panhala. So serious was the danger that Shivaji compounded with the commandant of Phonda and, raising the siege, returned northwards through the Portuguese territories near Goa, plundering them as he went.<sup>2</sup> When Abdul Karim had almost reached Panhala, Prataprao Guzar returned from his raid.<sup>3</sup> The king sent him word that he should not show his face at court until he had destroyed Abdul Karim's army.<sup>4</sup> The message reached the Maratha general as the battle opened. Once again his temper got the mastery of his judgment. He made a headlong charge on Abdul Karim's army. The Bijapur troops were more heavily armed than the Marathas, whom they repulsed with great slaughter. Among those who fell was Prataprao Guzar himself. Abdul Karim pushed his advantage vigorously and the main Maratha army was soon fleeing wildly towards Panhala. At the most critical moment of the battle Hasaji Mohite, the commander of 5,000 horse kept as a reserve, fell on the flank of the Bijapur troops as they pressed on in the disorder of victory. Instantly the fate of the battle changed. The Marathas rallied and, inflicting a severe defeat upon Abdul Karim, forced him to fall back once more on Bijapur. The king heard the news of the battle with sorrow. All satisfaction at the success was lost in grief at the death of Prataprao. He reviewed the victorious army at Chiplun and in its presence referred feelingly to its dead commander. He bestowed handsome estates on his relatives and chose Prataprao's daughter to be the bride of his second son Rajaram. To Mohite, whose skill and daring had won the losing battle, the king gave the title of Hambirrao and the vacant post of commander-in-chief of the royal cavalry.

The anomalous position occupied by Shivaji had long exercised his mind. He enjoyed the hereditary title of Raja conferred on his family by the Ahmadnagar government. But the Nizam Shahi dynasty had long ceased to exist. He had been confirmed in the title and created a noble of the Delhi empire. But since Aurangzib's last treachery, Shivaji had renounced his fealty to the Moghul throne.\* It was,

<sup>1</sup> *Shedgavkar Bakhār.*

<sup>2</sup> *Orme, Historical Fragments.*

*Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Sabhasad Bakhār.*

therefore, impossible to say whence he derived his authority. Nor was this difficulty merely academic. For although the high-spirited Deccan nobles gladly followed Shivaji in the field, they were unwilling in private life to concede to him any precedence. And at state dinners they resented that a Bhosle should sit on a seat raised above those assigned to Mohites, Nimbalkars, Savants and Ghorpades. He spoke of the matter to his secretary, Balaji Abaji Chitnis, and the latter urged him to take the royal crown from the hands, not of a Moghul emperor, but of a Benares priest. The king consulted his mother Jijabai, the saintly Ramdas and his favourite goddess Bhavani and found them all favourable to his secretary's suggestion. The next difficulty was to induce a Brahman priest of sufficient standing to leave the banks of the Ganges, and undertake the long journey southward. It was soon overcome. It so happened that one of the leading Brahmans of Benares, Gaga Bhat by name, was on a visit to Paithan on the Godavari, and Balaji Chitnis urged that he should be approached on the subject. The king agreed and sent his secretary on a confidential mission to Gaga Bhat. The secretary, on reaching Paithan, invited the holy stranger to come to Raygad and there crown the king after the manner of the ancient Hindu emperors. Gaga Bhat objected that Shivaji was a Maratha and that the ceremonies observed at Ayodhya and Hastinapura were reserved for Kshatriya or Rajput kings. Chitnis met the objection by obtaining from Raygad a genealogical tree which showed the unbroken descent of Shivaji from Udesingh, Maharana of Udaipur. Gaga Bhat asked for time to consult his brethren on the banks of the Ganges. From them he received a favourable answer and agreed to comply with Shivaji's request. He, however, attached to his consent an important condition. The king was no doubt of Rajput origin. But of late years the Bhosle family had allowed the Rajput observances to lapse. Shivaji must, therefore, be invested with the sacred thread before he was anointed after the manner of the ancient Kshatriya kings. To this condition Shivaji consented. He sent a cavalcade headed by two saintly men, Bhalchandra Bhat Purohit and Somnath Bhat Katre, to lead the high priest from Paithan. In the meantime he made every preparation to erect at Raygad buildings suitable to the tremendous ceremony. No less than seven new public rooms and a number of state reception rooms were built.<sup>1</sup> On completion they were consecrated by the singing of Vedic hymns, by sacrificial fires and holy oblations. Thereafter a new throne was erected in the audience hall. Round it were placed wooden figures of lions, tigers and elephants and on its base were carved the thirty-two points of the compass that the spectators might learn that the whole earth was the destined prey of the Maratha king's irresistible armies.

As Gaga Bhat drew nearer, Shivaji and his ministers rode to Satara where they met the sage in state and accompanied him by slow stages to Raygad. On May 21, 1674, the ceremonial began.

<sup>1</sup> The account of the coronation is taken from the *Shivdurgvaya Bakhshar* and other manuscripts in the Parasnis collection.

Shivaji passed the day<sup>1</sup> in worshipping the various Hindu gods and separately invoked their help to bring it to a successful conclusion. Three days later he was invested with the sacred thread. He first anointed himself with perfumed oil and prostrated himself before his mother. Ganga Bhat then flung over his head the silken thread that marks the three higher castes and whispered to him the *Gayatri mantra*—the mystic invocation to the Sun-god, which is reserved for their ears alone. This rite concluded, it had been intended to amuse the spectators by letting water into a little lake recently excavated and honoured by the name of Ganga Sagar. A magician struck the ground, the sluice gate in the walls was drawn back and the water, as if obedient to the wizard's wand, poured into the artificial lake. A rough Mawali soldier, completely deceived by the pantomime, fancied that the magician had plotted to drown the king. He drew his sword and cut down the unhappy mummer. His widow and children rushed to Shivaji for justice and he soothed their grief by a grant of land close to Raygad valued at Rs 200 annually. On May 31, 1674, Shivaji, now a Rajput beyond all dispute, worshipped Ganpati and implored that kindly god to bless his coronation. Between May 31 and June 6 the priests burnt sacrificial fires and purified themselves by fast and vigil. The king paid a visit to Pratapgad<sup>2</sup> and bestowed on the temple of his favourite goddess a massive gold lamp and other precious gifts.

On June 6, the day found propitious by the wisest astrologers in all India, the coronation was held.<sup>2</sup> In one of the open courtyards was erected a mighty *shamiana* or state tent. Inside it was a temporary throne raised upon a square dais. At the prescribed moment, the ministers appeared in procession leading Shivaji, clad in white, to the throne. Behind the king followed Jijabai, and behind her came the queens and the wives of the high officers of the kingdom. After Shivaji had seated himself, Moropant Pingle, the Peshwa, took his stand to the east of the throne holding in his hand a gold pot filled with *ghee*. To the south stood Hambirrao Mohite holding a silver vessel filled with milk. To the west stood Ramchandra Nilkant with a copper vessel filled with curds. To the north stood Raghunath Pant with a golden pot of honey in one hand and in the other an earthen pot of Ganges water. To the south-east stood Annaji Datto who carried the state umbrella. To the south-west was Janardan Pandit who held a fan. To the north-west and north-east Dattaji Pandit and Balaji Pandit plied fly-whisks. In front of Shivaji and, facing him, stood Balaji Abaji Chitnis, the private secretary, and to his left Chinnaji Avaji, the chief accountant. One after the other, those ministers who had vessels in their hands, sprinkled the contents over the king to the accompaniment of sacred hymns. After they had resumed their places, a married woman performed the *arti* by flashing a lamp in front of the king's eyes. He then gazed at his own reflection

<sup>1</sup> Fryer, *Travels*, Vol. I, p. 202.

<sup>2</sup> Shivaji's *Rajshaka* era commences from this day, June 6<sup>th</sup> (*Jeshtha Shudha* 13, *Shaka* 1596).

in a bronze pot filled with *ghee* and afterwards in a mirror. After a short pause he made some gifts to Brahmans, worshipped a small golden image of Vishnu and fastened it to his right hand. Lastly, he worshipped his sword and shield, his bow and his arrows.

The preliminary ceremonies were now over. The king took off the white dress in which he had entered the *shamiana*. Sixteen Brahman women and sixteen Brahman girls were placed in front of him. They anointed him with perfumed oil, poured warm water over his back and shoulders and waved tiny lamps around his head. Shivaji was now pure enough to mount the permanent throne in the audience hall. He put on his royal robes and covered himself with jewelry. Gaga Bhat then stepped forward and, taking him by the hand, led him out of the *shamiana* to the foot of the throne. Over it had been placed a tiger skin, a velvet bag stuffed with cotton and over it again a piece of transparent muslin. Shivaji knelt for a moment in front of the kingly chair and then took his seat upon it. Instantly every gun in the fortress boomed a royal salute. As the sound reached the neighbouring forts, they one after the other fired their homage until, from Kalyan in the north to Savantvadi in the south, every stronghold in the Sahyadris had proclaimed the accession of the new Ramachandra.

After Shivaji had been duly installed, he had himself weighed against gold coins.<sup>1</sup> These he distributed among the Brahmans who had flocked to see the great king's coronation. Dresses of honour and new titles were conferred on the eight chief ministers and the rites ended with an elephant procession round Raygad. On the following day Shivaji received an embassy from Bombay. The English had never ceased to press their claims for losses suffered at Rajapur and Hubli and to ask that their rights should be defined by a regular treaty. The king had after some delay announced that he would receive the embassy at Raygad after his coronation Durbar. Oxenden together with two English factors started from Bombay and travelled through Chaul, Ashtami, Nizampur and Gangavli, and after an uneventful journey reached Pachad at the foot of Raygad. They stayed at Pachad as the king's guests until he could receive them, which he did on the day after he was crowned. Some twenty requests had been made by the East India Company. Of these the most important were:—

- (1) The English should be permitted freely to trade in the king's dominions on paying an import duty of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.
- (2) The English should be permitted to build permanent factories at Rajapur, Dabhol, Chaul and Kalyan.
- (3) English coins should be allowed to circulate freely throughout the king's territories.
- (4) All English ships wrecked on the king's shores should be restored to them.
- (5) The king should compensate the English for their losses at Hubli and Rajapur.

<sup>1</sup> He weighed 16,000 *hons* or pagodas. His total weight was 140 lb., i.e., 10 stone.

The king received the embassy in state. The Englishmen were permitted to advance to the foot of the throne. There Oxenden presented a diamond ring and received in return a robe of honour. Some days later, the king approved a treaty with the English. He refused to grant any compensation for the losses at Hubli, but allowed them 10,000 pagodas for their losses at Rajapur. All the other requests presented by Oxenden were granted. Taking advantage of the king's urbanity, Oxenden ventured to suggest that the Marathas should make peace with Janjira.<sup>1</sup> But his unsought mediation was politely rejected. As the English ambassadors were returning homewards, an amusing incident occurred.<sup>2</sup> The butcher who had under Shivaji's orders supplied them with meat begged for an audience with them. To obtain it he followed them up Raygad hill. After gazing at the little party for some time he explained that he had wished to gratify his eyes by the sight of men who had in one month eaten more of his meat than the rest of his customers had eaten during years together.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE GREAT SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN

A.D. 1674 TO 1678

SHORTLY after Shivaji's coronation, his mother Jijabai died. Throughout his life she had been the counsellor to whom he had always turned in cases of doubt or difficulty. To his prayers alone she had renounced her resolve to follow, like a high-born Maratha lady, her husband through the flames. Possibly over-fatigued by the excitement of the great ceremonial which she had witnessed and in which she had played a part, she was suddenly attacked by fever. In two or three days the violence of her fever was such that the doctors gave up hope. On the fourth day she resigned herself to her approaching fate and distributed much of her wealth among the Brahman community, especially the Brahman priests of Pratapgad. On the fifth day of her illness she died. Her body was burnt at Raygad. After the period of mourning<sup>3</sup> had elapsed, her ashes were at Shivaji's command conveyed to Allahabad and there cast into the confluence of the Ganges and the Jamna.

The king found solace for his grief in organizing a raid on the Portuguese districts round Bassein (1674). He sent Moro Pingle with 10,000 men to Kalyan.<sup>4</sup> Thence Pingle sent to the Portuguese a demand for *chauth*, giving as his reason the recent forcible conversion of Hindus to Christianity. The Portuguese, unwilling to bring on themselves the wrath of the king, seem, without admitting their liability to *chauth*, to have paid a sum of money and averted the danger.<sup>5</sup> In 1675 a large body of Kolis and other irregulars from the Dharampur state invaded the Kalyan district. They were no doubt

<sup>1</sup> Orme, *Historical Fragments*.      <sup>2</sup> Fryer, *Travels*.      <sup>3</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar*.

<sup>4</sup> Orme, *Historical Fragments*.      <sup>5</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar*.

instigated by the Moghuls. Moro Pinglé therefore retaliated by retaking the forts of Aundha and Patta in Khandesh. And Shivaji made a second attempt to surprise Shivner. It was more nearly successful than the first one had been. Three hundred Marathas had actually scaled the fort walls. But the governor, Abdul Aziz Khan, was a gallant and experienced officer. Although he had sent a part of his garrison to defend the town of Junnar, he yet managed to save the situation. With the remainder of his troops he attacked the storming party, captured their rope ladders and drove them into the interior of the fort. The next day the few survivors surrendered after a gallant resistance. With admirable bravado, Abdul Aziz Khan sent them back to Shivaji and invited him with their aid to retrieve his fortunes by another assault. The king, however, had other aims. He was determined to overcome the resistance of the Phonda fort. Raising the siege of Shivner, he marched south and invaded the open country round Phaltan, which Abdul Karim had recovered, during his advance on Panhala two years before, for its chief the Naik Nimbalkar. He then marched into the Konkan to besiege Phonda. But as he marched westwards Nimbalkar re-entered Phaltan and drove out his garrisons. Shivaji, however, did not turn back. He once again sat down before Phonda. The commandant had gone to Bijapur during the rainy season, but hearing of Shivaji's return he hastened back to defend the fort. This he did most gallantly until the following April when, owing to the explosion of a mine under his walls, he was forced to capitulate (1676). Shivaji had now an open road southwards. He marched along the coast and levied large contributions from the raja of Sonda, established several forts to overawe the district and again plundered the town of Karwar. During his absence Hambirrao Mohite, the new cavalry commander-in-chief, had raided the Moghul territories in Gujarat as far as Broach, and had after hard fighting brought his booty safe to Raygad. On the other hand the Sidi of Janjira had made a naval descent upon Shivaji's coast line.

The rainy season of 1676 Shivaji spent at Raygad. But directly the monsoon had abated he turned his attention to the Phaltan country. He again drove out the Naik Nimbalkar and built four forts between Tathwada and Panhala, named Wardhangad, Bhushangad, Sadashivagad and Machendragad. By this means he made himself permanent master of Nimbalkar's country. The fatigue, however, of the recent Konkan campaign had been too much even for Shivaji's iron frame. For some months he was confined to bed at Satara by intermittent fever, and so grave was his illness that a baseless rumour spread that his son Sambhaji had poisoned him. Yet never had the great king's intellect been clearer than during this enforced idleness. As he lay in bed he planned an expedition, which by its boldness in design and skill in execution sufficed by itself to place Shivaji in the front rank of the world's greatest generals.

Fully to understand the grandiose character of the king's new campaign, we must return to events at Bijapur.<sup>1</sup> Upon the death of

<sup>1</sup> The following account I have taken from Scott's *Deccan*, Vol. II.

Ali Adil Shah, two leading Bijapur nobles struggled for power. They were Khavas Khan and Abdul Karim, the general who had twice fought battles with Prataprao Guzar. Khavas Khan was an Abyssinian and headed the combined African and Deccan party. Abdul Karim was an Afghan adventurer, who had followed the fortunes of Khan Jehan Lodi and had, after his death, entered the Bijapur service. During the reign of Ali Adil Shah, Abdul Karim had been appointed viceroy of Miraj, the Southern Maratha Country and the Konkan. Khavas Khan had been appointed regent by the dying king. To secure himself in favour he made overtures to Bahadur Khan, the Moghul viceroy of the Deccan. The viceroy gladly accepted them and betrothed his second son to Khavas Khan's daughter. In return Khavas Khan agreed to hold Bijapur as a Moghul fief and to marry the late king's daughter Padshah Bibi to one of the emperor's sons. The alliance between the Abyssinian regent and the Moghul viceroy spelt ruin for Abdul Karim and the Afghan party of which he was the leader. He therefore had recourse to treachery. He affected to desire a reconciliation for the good of the common weal and thus induced the slow-witted African to visit him at his house at Bijapur. There at a private interview Khavas Khan was seized and shortly afterwards murdered. The Moghul viceroy, who had reported to the emperor his negotiations with Khavas Khan, received immediate orders to attack Bijapur and punish Abdul Karim's perfidy. Bahadur Khan collected his troops near Sholapur. An indecisive battle took place between him and Abdul Karim on the banks of the Bhima and both armies entrenched themselves. But during the night some Bijapur troops rushed the imperial camp and inflicted such loss that Bahadur Khan retreated to the north of the Bhima. There he received reinforcements and began to resume the offensive. In the meantime, however, Diler Khan had joined Bahadur Khan's army and, as an Afghan, was favourably disposed towards Abdul Karim. The two leaders called a truce and entered into a formal offensive and defensive alliance for the subjugation of the Golconda state.

That kingdom had also been torn by internal strife. The last king, Abdul Kutb Shah, had been completely subservient to Moghul policy. In 1672 he died and his son-in-law Abu Hussein succeeded him. The idleness of Abu Hussein's youth had led him into dissipation, and his succession was approved by Aurangzib, who looked forward eagerly to the disruption of Golconda and its easy conquest by Moghul arms. But work and responsibility reclaimed Abu Hussein and, to the surprise of Aurangzib, a wise and vigorous king began to direct the affairs of Golconda. He soon showed himself hostile to the Moghuls and raised two Brahman brothers, Madannapant and Akannapant, to the highest posts in the state. His policy brought on him the combined hostility of Diler Khan and Abdul Karim. But Abu Hussein's ruin would have exposed Shivaji to a similar fate. He therefore resolved to ally himself to Golconda. At the same time his fertile brain conceived another and a far more imposing design. He knew the history of the Vijayanagar state and the gallant resistance



which it had for centuries offered to the Musulman invaders. He also had no illusions as to the precarious tenure by which he held his own kingdom. Fortunately Aurangzib still regarded him as little more than a rebellious zamindar. But the day that the emperor considered him a real danger, he would mobilize against the king the entire military resources of Hindustan. Nothing then would save Shivaji unless he could with his army fall back to some refuge in southern India. Shivaji's design, therefore, was to win a new kingdom which would stretch right across southern India from Bednur to Tanjore. Having won it he would guard its northern frontier from Moghul attack by a line of forts and extend his conquests as far south as possible. He might then defy the armies of Delhi by retreating before them, until they were so weakened by their endless line of communications that he might attack them in the field with some prospect of success.<sup>1</sup>

It was necessary that this plan should be concealed from the Moghuls. So Shivaji announced that he wished to go to Tanjore and recover from his brother Vyankoji his half share in Shahaji's jaghir. This fief included Bangalore, Kolar, Uscotha and a number of places in Mysore. By taking advantage of quarrels between the rulers of Tanjore and Madura, Shahaji had forced them to pay tribute. And Vyankoji had, on succeeding to his father's inheritance, made himself master of all Tanjore. In 1675 he moved his capital there from Bangalore. Shivaji now gave out that he was entitled to half of Shahaji's inheritance and that, if necessary, he meant by arms to enforce his claims. He could not, however, leave his kingdom while the Moghuls were actively hostile. He therefore induced the Moghul viceroy Bahadur Khan, whose besetting sin was avarice, to accept tribute on behalf of the emperor and a large bribe on his own account. He entrusted the general care of the kingdom to Moro Pingle and the defence of the southern frontier to Annaji Datto. Then, with a force of 70,000 men, he boldly marched through Bijapur territory until he reached the borders of the Golconda state. The assurances of Bahadur Khan to Abdul Karim that Shivaji wished merely to secure his share in his father's inheritance were supported by recent events in Tanjore. Shahaji's old minister Raghunathpant Hanmante had recently quarrelled with Vyankoji. With the familiarity of an old servant he had openly lectured him on his failings and had laid stress on the inferiority of his character compared with that of his famous brother. Vyankoji resented the lecture and rebuked the minister Hanmante, losing his temper, in his turn resigned his office and, threatening that Vyankoji would soon regret his conduct, left Tanjore for Hyderabad. These circumstances, together with the severe discipline in Shivaji's army and the regularity with which he paid for all supplies, induced Abdul Karim to allow it to pass through Bijapur territory unmolested. When Shivaji reached the Golconda frontier, he sent word to Hanmante, begging him to convince the king that he

<sup>1</sup> Ranade, p. 89. This eminent writer was the first to discover the profound policy which underlay Shivaji's Carnatic expedition.

meant no harm and to urge on him the advantages of an alliance between Abu Hussein and the Marathas. Both Hanmante and Madannapant happened to be eminent students of Sanskrit metaphysics and their common studies enabled Hanmante to secure the ear of Madannapant. Through him he obtained an interview with Abu Hussein, whom he completely won by the fluency with which he spoke Persian.<sup>1</sup> The Golconda king sent to Shivaji a formal invitation to Hyderabad. Shivaji accepted it gladly and continued his march until twelve miles from Hyderabad. There Madannapant and the leading nobles awaited him. After the usual state visits, negotiations were begun and after a month the two kings contracted an offensive and defensive alliance. Shivaji was to guarantee the safety of Golconda in case of aggression from Bijapur or Delhi. In return Shivaji was to receive a sum of money and a park of artillery and to have a free hand against Bijapur and the Hindu chiefs of the south. After the treaty had been signed, Shivaji struck his camp and headed due south. He crossed the Kistna at its junction with the Tungabhadra. There he directed his army to march southwards towards Cuddapah, while he visited the shrine of Shri Mallikarjun at Parvatam, about fifty miles lower down the Kistna.

The temple is a famous one and stands on a hill overlooking the Kistna. There Shivaji fasted for nine days and at last, influenced by his penance and devotion, conceived the idea of offering his life as a sacrifice to the deity.<sup>2</sup> From this purpose he was dissuaded by a vision of Bhavani, who told him that she still had work which he alone could accomplish. Bhavani's commands were supported by the advice of Hanmante, who urged the king to display his piety in a more practical manner. Instead of offering to the shrine a life of priceless value to the Maratha nation, let him honour the shrine by building accommodation for the pilgrims who at recurring seasons flocked there to worship. Shivaji consented. Before leaving Parvatam, he gave a large sum to the priests. Some of it was to be distributed among the poor. The rest was to be spent in building bathing-places and rest-houses along the banks of the Kistna. Shivaji then visited several other sacred spots in the neighbourhood and eventually rejoined his army at Cuddapah. His first objective was Jinji,<sup>3</sup> a fortress to the north-west of Pondicherry and destined afterwards to become doubly famous from Aurangzib's siege and De Bussy's escalade. The country through which Shivaji now marched belonged nominally to Bijapur. But owing to the decay of the government, it had passed into the hands of local chiefs who were in no condition to oppose the Maratha army. The only resistance with which Shivaji met came from a Bijapur officer named Sher Khan, who held the important town of Trimali Mahal, corrupted by the English into Trinomali (May 1677).

With 5,000 horse, Sher Khan made a gallant effort to stem the invasion. He attacked Shivaji's vanguard. But he was routed,

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdurgvijaya Bakhsh*.

<sup>2</sup> *Sabhasad Bakhsh*.

<sup>3</sup> The Maratha name is Chandi.

enveloped and captured with his entire force. Shivaji occupied Trinomali and prepared to besiege Jinji. The fall, however, of Trinomali so dispirited the Bijapur commandant Ambar Khan, that he went in person to Shivaji's camp and handed him the keys of the fortress. Ambar Khan's eight sons, whom he had left at Jinji, showed a higher sense of duty. They did their best to defend their father's charge; but after a vigorous attack their courage gave way. In return for a grant of land they capitulated and the king entered Jinji in triumph.

While Shivaji was advancing southwards, he left a part of his force to attack Vellore, a large town on the Palar river, some fifty miles due north of Jinji. The commandant, being summoned to surrender, returned an insulting answer and defended the town with resolution and success. The fall of Jinji, however, enabled Shivaji to return to Vellore. His experienced eyes noticed that two hills in the neighbourhood commanded the defence of the town.<sup>1</sup> Posting batteries on the hills, which he named Sajara and Gojara, he overcame the commandant's resistance, and in September 1676 Vellore surrendered. Shivaji did not await its fall, but after erecting his batteries he went with his mounted troops to Trivadi, a town some forty miles south of Jinji and on the road to Tanjore. Thence he sent a letter to his brother Vyankoji. It recited that, ever since their father Shahaji's death, his estate had been in the hands of Vyankoji to the exclusion of his own rights. He now called upon Vyankoji to submit his accounts and hand over half the hereditary estate together with mesne profits from the date on which it came into his possession. The close however of his letter showed that he was unwilling to exact his claims to the uttermost. He begged Vyankoji to send to his camp a certain Govind Bhat with four other men, whom he named,<sup>2</sup> to settle the dispute amicably.

It must be admitted that Vyankoji's case was not without its strong points. The estate to which Shivaji laid claims was not an ordinary inheritance. It was a fief granted to Shahaji by the Bijapur government and upon Shahaji's death had been granted in its entirety to Vyankoji. Shivaji, however, met this argument by pointing out that, although Shahaji's possessions were nominally held in fief, he was really an independent ruler. Bijapur had in its turn regranted them to Vyankoji. But the grant had been made *ex parte* and Shivaji's case had received no hearing. After discussing the matter through his agents, Vyankoji decided to visit Shivaji himself, and to try to induce him to see the dispute with his eyes. He wrote to his brother of his intention and in reply received a cordial invitation to the royal camp. Vyankoji thereupon set out for Trivadi, where Shivaji received him with every honour. He stayed at the king's camp for over two months and the two brothers repeatedly discussed Shivaji's claims on his father's inheritance. Shivaji was willing to compromise the

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdurgajaya Bukhar.*

<sup>2</sup> The names of the four other men were Kakajipant, Nilo Naik, Raghunath Naik and Tomaji Naik.

dispute. But Vyankoji, whose understanding was narrow, refused to recede from his position that it was not undivided property governed by Hindu laws, of inheritance, but a fief granted to him alone. The king bore his brother's obstinacy with exemplary patience. And when the fall of Vellore required his presence there, he dismissed Vyankoji with the same honours that had greeted his arrival. But that Vyankoji should not fancy that the king had abandoned his claims, Shivaji a few days later sent him a letter in which he restated them and warned his brother that he meant to enforce them, unless he made a reasonable compromise with the three agents, Shamaji Naik, Konherpant and Shivajipant, whom he was sending to Tanjore. Their arguments fell on deaf ears. Shivaji's army had returned to Vellore, and Vyankoji may have hoped that the move was the beginning of a retreat to Maharashtra. He therefore referred the matter to the Bijapur government. It gave an unexpected reply. Far too frightened of Shivaji to give him a pretext for a direct attack on the capital, it begged Vyankoji to give his elder brother all he asked for and let him depart in peace. Vyankoji, disgusted with the answer, resolved to defend by force what he believed to be his by right. In this resolve he was supported by the Musulman soldiers who had served Shahaji and had continued in Vyankoji's service. Hastily gathering a considerable force, he sought to surprise a Maratha detachment which Hambirrao Mohite commanded not far from the Tanjore frontier. The attack was badly executed and easily repelled. In the pursuit a large number of Vyankoji's soldiers were slain and the remainder fell back upon Tanjore. In the meantime Shivaji, despairing of an amicable settlement to the dispute, had taken the most effective means of ending it. He invaded all the fiefs which Vyankoji had inherited outside Tanjore. Arni, Kolar, Bangalore, Balapur and Sira all fell in 1677.

The defeated Vyankoji could do nothing to help the garrisons, and after their surrender Shivaji, his communications secure, was free to carry out his design and conquer a kingdom that stretched from sea to sea (1678). He marched northwards from Sira along the banks of the Velavati river, until he reached the town of Bellary, a corruption of Belvadi, or the orchard of the sacred *bel* tree. The commandant had attacked one of his patrols and had carried off their carts and horses to Bellary. The king first attempted to blockade it, but Bellary was so well supplied with food that the king resolved to take it by assault. He set fire to some houses not far from the fort walls, which caused considerable confusion among the outposts. Taking advantage of it, he drove them back on the fort with great loss. The commandant, trying to rally his men, fell. But his widow Savitribai<sup>1</sup> acted with admirable courage. She mounted one of her husband's chargers, checked the fleeing garrison and repulsed the Marathas. For twenty-six days of hard fighting she kept the great king and his troops at bay. On the twenty-seventh day, the Marathas carried by assault the main defences and forced the garrison back into the

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar*. The *Shedgavkar Bakhar* gives her name as Malwai.

citadel. Then only the gallant lady surrendered. Shivaji received her with chivalrous courtesy. All the districts south of the Tungabhadra now submitted, and Shivaji crossing that river near Vijayanagar entered the *doab*, the strip of land for which the chivalry of Islam and of Vijayanagar had so often fought and died. Before advancing further he decided to settle if possible his dispute with Vyankoji.

That unhappy prince had been deeply depressed by the defeat of his entire army by Hambirrao Mohite's single detachment. His Hindu officers became mutinous and openly expressed their wish to fight under Shivaji's banner. While in this melancholy condition, he received a sharp letter from his brother. In it, Shivaji reproached him both with his treachery and with his stupidity in taking the advice of his Musulman courtiers. The king then restated his case and warned him that unless he at once submitted his accounts and peacefully resigned his rights to half Shivaji's inheritance, Shivaji would remove him from Tanjore by force and give him for his support some lands near Panhala, thus reducing him to the state of an ordinary Maratha noble in his train. In despair, Vyankoji sought the advice of his wife Dipabai. She, with the ability and prudence often possessed by Maratha ladies, urged him to abase himself before Raghunath Hanmante and to obtain his intercession. Vyankoji had no alternative but to follow this unpleasant advice. He sent a humble letter to Hanmante. At first the latter could not resist humiliating his former master. He wrote back that he was Shivaji's servant and could not comply with Vyankoji's request. The unhappy prince wrote again in even more slavish terms, begging Hanmante to return to Tanjore. After the latter's vanity had been sufficiently gratified, he consented to visit Vyankoji. The prince received him in state, placed him on the throne by his side and did all that humility could effect to win his former minister's good graces. Hanmante, touched by his master's abasement, wrote to Shivaji. He described eloquently the pitiable state of Vyankoji and begged Shivaji to show him the consideration due from an elder to a younger brother. Now that Vyankoji was anxious to be reconciled, it befitted the great king to treat him with generosity equal to his power. Shivaji received the letter gladly. He replied to Hanmante that with all his heart he forgave his brother. Provided Vyankoji entered into an alliance with Shivaji, the latter would permit him to retain Tanjore and would give him in addition adjacent lands valued at seven lakhs a year. The hereditary fiefs in Bangalore and elsewhere he would bestow as gifts on his sister-in-law Dipabai, whose admirable advice had influenced her husband. At the same time Shivaji wrote to Vyankoji. His words were few and to the point. The terms which he had granted to his brother would continue only so long as Vyankoji remained a true ally. To ensure that he did so, Shivaji imposed on his brother Hanmante as his first minister. The alliance offered by Shivaji to Vyankoji was worthy both of a brother and of a king. And Vyankoji gladly accepted it. The king's line of communications was now perfectly safe and he could turn again to the conquest of the *doab*.

The Bijapur government did its utmost to save this last fragment torn by it from the Vijayanagar kingdom. The governor Yusuf Khan Mayna received strong reinforcements and strict orders to hold the *doab* at all costs. Agreeably to these orders, Yusuf Khan decided to attack Shivaji's troops near Torgal, while Nimbalkar, chief of Phaltan, supported the governor by a raid into the territory round Panhala. But the great king was more than a match for any armies which Bijapur, shorn of its strength, could raise. A body of horse<sup>1</sup> under Niloji Katkar attacked and defeated Nimbalkar. Hambirrao Mohite, no longer needed at Tanjore, joined the king with his detachment. The combined forces won a signal victory over Yusuf Khan. Repelling his attack with great slaughter, they continued their pursuit until he retired northwards across the Kistna, leaving the entire *doab* in the king's hands. Shivaji had now successfully concluded his campaign. With two enemies, one on either flank, and a doubtful ally on his line of communications, he had crossed India from west to east and back again from east to west. In the course of eighteen months, at a distance of 700 miles from his base, he had conquered a territory as large as his former kingdom. While a single reverse would have been fatal, he had not suffered even a single check. Victory had succeeded victory, town had fallen after town. As he went, he organized his conquests; and when he returned to Raygad, as he now did, his new possessions were securely bound together from sea to sea, by a line of fortified strongholds held by garrisons brave to the death and devoted to his cause.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE LAST DAYS OF THE GREAT KING

A D 1678 TO 1680

IN spite of Shivaji's presents to Bahadur Khan, the Moghuls had not remained idle during the great king's southern campaign. Diler Khan and Abdul Karim disapproved of the truce with the Marathas. The latter had allied themselves to the Golconda king, whose destruction Diler Khan and Abdul Karim had planned. Indeed Shivaji was actually plundering Bijapur territory. The two Afghan chiefs pressed their views on the emperor and urged him to sanction an attack by them upon Golconda as Shivaji's ally. The fall of Golconda would cut the communications of Shivaji and stop his supplies. He might then be overtaken and defeated. The emperor, convinced of Bahadur Khan's treachery and incapacity, recalled him to Delhi. In his place the emperor appointed Diler Khan as Moghul viceroy. He and Abdul Karim now united their forces at Gulbarga and attacked Malkhed, the frontier fortress of Golconda (1677). After a defence, long

enough to enable the Golconda troops to march towards their relief, the garrison evacuated Malkhed and joined the main army. The Golconda forces, reorganized by Abu Hussein and his two Brahman ministers Madannapant and Akannapant, soon proved their metal. They successfully resisted Diler Khan's attack until the monsoon of 1677 burst. The rains fell with unusual force. The supplies in the Moghul camp rotted and the activity of the Golconda cavalry prevented their renewal. The Moghul troops maintained their discipline. But the troops of Bijapur, long unpaid, lost heart. They deserted in such large numbers that the Bijapur army soon ceased to exist. Abdul Karim fell ill and Diler Khan, unable single-handed to cope with Abu Hussein's army, decided to retreat to Gulbarga. He first asked for and obtained an armistice from Abu Hussein, promising him to grant peace. He really intended to obtain reinforcements from Gulbarga and renew the attack. Abu Hussein first allowed him to retire unmolested, but learning his treachery from deserters he overtook Diler Khan and with continued fury attacked his rearguard. After a most arduous retreat of twelve days, in which the Moghul army suffered immense losses, Diler Khan reached the shelter of Gulbarga. There the valour of the Rajput contingent enabled the army to rally and Abu Hussein fell back within his own frontiers. Abdul Karim never recovered from his illness. An empty treasury and a phantom army made it impossible for him either to avenge his recent defeat or to remain regent. Diler Khan visited the dying man and induced him to resign the regency in favour of an Abyssinian leader named Sidi Musaud, who undertook to pay the Bijapur army their arrears. Once, however, Sidi Musaud had obtained power, he refused the troops their dues. They mutinied and besieged the house of Abdul Karim. Death released him from his troubles. But the mutineers forced their way into his house and plundered his women and his son of everything they possessed. They then entered the service either of Diler Khan, who had fallen back on Aurangabad, or of Shivaji's Peshwa, Moropant Pingle.

The emperor was incensed at the result of the last campaign and again reduced Diler Khan to the post of second-in-command, reinstating Prince Muazzim as viceroy of the Deccan. It was now useless to attack Golconda. But some compensation for the late disasters might be extorted from the unhappy state of Bijapur. To effect this, Diler Khan received orders to press all Afghans still in the service of Bijapur to enrol in the imperial service. All who did so were to receive their arrears of pay and regular salary. His army thus reinforced, Diler Khan was at once to march against his unfortunate ally and his capital. Diler Khan obeyed Aurangzib's order and detached the Afghans who still remained in the service of the minor king, Sikandar Adil Shah. He then marched against Bijapur, advancing as a pretext that he wished to take away the king's sister Padshah Bibi, whom the former regent Khavas Khan had betrothed to one of Aurangzib's sons. Sidi Musaud Khan, the regent to whom Abdul Karim had resigned his office, refused to surrender her and in this refusal he was supported by the populace of the capital. Diler

Khan declared war and marched upon Bijapur. In despair Padshah Bibi<sup>1</sup> resolved, by sacrificing herself, to save her country. Accompanied by the court physician Shamsuddin and an ample escort, she rode out to meet the Moghul general<sup>2</sup>. He received her with all consideration and sent her with a body of Moghul horse to the emperor at Delhi. Then with shameless inconsistency he continued his advance against Bijapur. The spirit of the populace burnt to a white heat of fury. So valiant was the defence that Diler Khan never succeeded in establishing a blockade. In revenge he began to destroy the canals and gardens that stretched for some miles outside the city. But the villagers fought like veterans and, after a fearful slaughter, drove Diler Khan back for some distance from the city. Large reinforcements, however, came from Delhi, and Musaud Khan, the regent, turned in his despair to Shivaji. In a touching letter he referred to the many services which Shahaji had rendered to the late king and now implored his son to forget recent animosities and remember only ancient friendship. With Shivaji's help, he wrote, Bijapur could be saved. Without it Bijapur must capitulate and its fall would shortly be followed by that of Shivaji.

The king had already wished to send help to the tottering kingdom. He had so shaken its foundations that it could no longer harm him. And he had no desire that its treasure should go to strengthen the Delhi government. Issuing from the neighbourhood of Panhala, he advanced close to Bijapur. There he left a large body of horse to cut the Moghul communications. Then with the rest of the troops he crossed the Bhima and made his way due north into Khandesh. There he plundered Dharangaon and Chopra, two towns to the north of Aurangabad and between it and Burhanpur. He hoped by severing the connexion between Aurangabad and Delhi to induce Prince Muazzim to recall Diler Khan's army from Bijapur. He then turned south-east and attacked Jalna, a prosperous town to the east of Aurangabad. Jalna was barely more than fifty miles from the Moghul capital of the Deccan. There Shivaji remained for three days. Every act that might rouse the prince to fury he committed. But no act could sting the heavy, thick-skinned prince to action. He waited until Shivaji loaded his booty in carts and began his return journey. Then he sent 10,000 men under one Ranmast Khan to harass Shivaji's retirement. The Musulman officer did his duty with skill and courage. He overtook Shivaji near Sangamner and fought with him a drawn battle until darkness fell. Next morning Shivaji made a counter-attack. Although outnumbered, the Musulmans fought with great bravery. On the Maratha side Hambirrao Mohite fell wounded. On the Moghul side Ranmast Khan was unhorsed and taken prisoner. At last the desperate valour of the king himself turned the drawn fight into a brilliant victory. But the battle was hardly over when another Moghul force tried to cut him off from the passes. He received information of the Moghul intention from a Maratha officer in the Delhi force.

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff, Vol. I, p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> Scott, *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> *Shedgavkar Bakhār*.



Happily the king's spy Bahirji Naik chanced to be with him and he offered to save the royal troops by leading them through a passage in the hills known to him alone. The king accepted the offer and after a long and difficult march brought his army and his booty in safety to Patta in Khandesh.

This fortress had recently been strengthened by Moro Pingle. It was impossible for the Moghuls to take it defended, as it now was, not only by a garrison but by Shivaji's whole army. They therefore fell back on Aurangabad. Shivaji did not pursue them, but reduced all the forts near Patta which Bahadur Khan had built to guard the passes into Khandesh. He had hardly made himself master of these valuable bridge-heads, when he received a despairing letter from Musaud Khan.<sup>1</sup> In it he thanked Shivaji for his efforts to cut the Moghul communications. In spite however of those efforts, he added, Diler Khan was vigorously conducting the siege and had reached the main fortifications of the capital. Nothing could save it except direct aid from Shivaji. The great king, who in his life never betrayed either a woman or a friend, resolved at once to send an army to attack the Moghuls outside Bijapur. He placed Moro Pingle in command of the infantry and entrusted the cavalry to Hambirrao Mohite who had speedily recovered from his wound. Shivaji himself returned to Panhala. Before he reached it, he learnt that his eldest son Sambhaji had deserted to Diler Khan's camp.

The young prince had all his father's bravery and a large share of his ability. But he had been born in the purple and had in idleness acquired vices from which his father's strenuous life had kept him free. Sambhaji had been attracted by the courtly Afghan,<sup>2</sup> whom he seems to have met at Aurangabad. He had recently quarrelled with his father and had been confined in Panhala. He now broke loose and sought a refuge with his Aurangabad acquaintance. Directly Shivaji heard of his son's flight he sent Maratha horse in pursuit. But Sambhaji managed to get a message through to Diler Khan who sent his own nephew Aklas Khan with a strong force to meet him. Sambhaji with their help eluded the Maratha horse and was received by Diler Khan with every honour. His coming was reported to the emperor who bestowed on him the command of 7,000 horse and a riding elephant. Diler Khan also bestowed on the prince dresses of honour and similar gifts. He then directed him to storm Bhupalgad, a fort which Shivaji had taken from the Bijapur king and which was situated about half way between the latter's capital and Satara. The commandant of Bhupalgad was that Phirangoji Narsala who had so gallantly defended Chakan. Phirangoji now found himself in a somewhat delicate position. Nevertheless his duty was clear. The king was his master. Sambhaji, although Shivaji's son, was a rebel and should have been treated accordingly. Phirangoji tried a middle course. He sent to Sambhaji a Brahman agent who implored the prince not to attack the fort. Sambhaji lost his temper, drew his sword and cut down the unfortunate agent. The same night the

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdattajaya Bakhar*

<sup>2</sup> *Shedgavkar Bakhar*.

prince drove in the outposts of the garrison and appeared at dawn before the main defences of Bhupalgad. At this point Phirangoji Narsala completely lost his head. He handed over his command to one of his subordinates and fled to Panhala to lay his difficulties before the king. Deserted by their commandant, the garrison still made a gallant defence. But Sambhan's impetuous attack carried everything before it. And long before Shivaji could send succour to Bhupalgad the place had fallen. Not unnaturally the king was incensed against Phirangoji Narsala, to whose indecision and cowardice he ascribed the loss of the fortress. He ordered his execution and had him blown to pieces from a cannon's mouth.

In the meantime, however, Aurangzib had changed his mind about Sambhaji.<sup>1</sup> Diler Khan had in a letter recommended that the emperor should recognize Sambhaji as king of the Marathas. This, he hoped, would create two factions among that nation, who would then destroy each other to the emperor's profit. Aurangzib at first approved of, but afterwards rejected, Diler Khan's recommendation. He conceived the fear that Sambhaji, instead of helping the Moghuls, might seduce the Hindu officers in the Moghul army to Shivaji's cause. He therefore bade Diler Khan arrest Sambhaji and bring him to Delhi. Diler Khan, Afghan though he was, would not stoop to such treachery. He informed Sambhaji of the emperor's orders and advised him to return to his father. To avert suspicion Diler Khan openly insulted Sambhaji, reduced his troops and left his allowance unpaid.<sup>2</sup> Sambhaji pretended to be much displeased at his treatment and, after communicating with Shivaji, was helped by Maratha agents to escape from Diler Khan's camp and return to Panhala. There his father received him cordially, but refused him a command and confined him in the fortress.<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime, Hambirrao Mohite and Moro Pingle had made their way to the neighbourhood of Bijapur. As they went they met some 10,000 Moghul horse, sent under Ranmast Khan to reinforce Diler Khan. A long running fight took place (1679). In the course of it, Ranmast Khan strove to retire to Aurangabad. Before he could reach that city he was brought to bay and completely defeated.<sup>4</sup> This victory encouraged Hambirrao Mohite and Moro Pingle to change their plans. Moro Pingle with half the army blockaded Aurangabad. Hambirrao Mohite and his cavalry established themselves firmly on Diler Khan's lines of communication. Diler Khan was now completely cut off from all help from Aurangabad. It was useless to continue the siege of Bijapur. But he would not raise it without one last desperate assault. It was repulsed with enormous losses. Next day Diler Khan struck his camp and retreated northwards. Even so he did not escape from his difficulties. Near the Bhima, Hambirrao Mohite furiously attacked the rearguard commanded by Diler Khan in person. After cutting in pieces several bodies of Afghan horse,

<sup>1</sup> *Sabhasad Bakhar.*

<sup>2</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar.*

<sup>3</sup> *Sabhasad Bakhar.*

<sup>4</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar.* This was not the same Ranmast Khan as the one taken prisoner at Sanganner.

Hambirrao drove the rest in confusion back upon the main army, which after great hardships succeeded in reaching Aurangabad.

Bijapur had, for the time being, been saved from Delhi. The regent and the nobles celebrated Diler Khan's defeat by a series of brilliant festivities. They invited Shivaji to be present. The king's practical mind cared little or nothing for their merry-making. He knew that without his aid Bijapur must have fallen. And he was determined to obtain a full cession of all his recent conquests. He, therefore, demanded as a condition of his acceptance that the regent should cede to him the whole line of conquered territory from the Kistna river to Tanjore and that Vyankoji should no longer be recognized as a fiefholder of the Bijapur king, but of Shivaji. Musaud Khan<sup>1</sup> had no alternative but to comply. He informed Shivaji that on his arrival at Bijapur, a *sanad* granting all his demands would be handed to him by the minor king, Sikandar Adil Shah. Upon the receipt of this reply Shivaji went in state to Bijapur. His arrival became a triumphal progress. The populace forgot the provinces which he had torn from the ancient kingdom. They only saw in him the soldier who had saved their beloved city from the clutches of the Moghuls. The young king, the regent and the courtiers vied with each other in the magnificence with which they entertained their Maratha guests. But Shivaji soon wearied of what he deemed a childish waste of time. He longed to return to his own country and to strive once again to reduce Janjira (1680).

Although Shivaji had everywhere triumphed on land, he had not had similar success at sea. Anxious as he was to remain friends with the English, he had for some years looked askance at their compliance with the demands of the Moghul fleet. In July 1676, Sidi Kasim, who had succeeded Sidi Sambal as admiral of the imperial navy, had entered Bombay harbour and had received permission to anchor off Mazagaon.<sup>2</sup> It cannot be denied that such a concession amounted to a breach of neutrality. Indeed the English, with their factory at Surat, hardly could be really neutral. Shivaji therefore resolved to attack and burn the English fleet in Bombay. He ordered his admirals Daulat Khan and Darya Sarang to sail thither (1678). But the monsoon burst earlier than usual and the Maratha fleet was forced to take shelter in the Panvel creek almost exactly opposite Bombay island. Thence they made occasional raids on Portuguese territory. In 1679 Shivaji largely increased his fleet and seized two islands, Khanderi and Underi, known to the English as Kenery and Henery, about sixteen miles due south of the island of Bombay. The English resented this and on October 15 an action took place between the English fleet and Daulat Khan's vessels. The Marathas attacked with great vigour. In a short time an English ship named the *Dove* hauled down its colours and five other English ships fell out of the line. But a powerful sixteen-gun frigate named the *Revenge* changed the fortunes of the day. Its guns were heavier than any of the Maratha artillery and, well handled by its commander, Captain Minchin, it sank five

<sup>1</sup> *Shivdigvijaya Bakhar*.

<sup>2</sup> Orme, *Historical Fragments*.

Maratha ships in succession. Daulat Khan then withdrew to Khanderi.

On November 10 the Sidi's fleet appeared. It numbered<sup>1</sup> two large battleships, three three-masted frigates and fifteen stout gallivats. On board were 700 excellent soldiers. But, although the Sidi came ostensibly as an ally of the English, he was, if possible, more unwelcome than Daulat Khan. For he gave out that he intended to take Khanderi and convert it into a Moghul naval base. The English at once tried to open negotiations with Shivaji. But the latter was too concerned at Sambhaji's defection to answer their message and shortly afterwards Sidi Kasim, professing to act on behalf of the English, landed on Shivaji's coast and carried off a number of slaves. This made all negotiations impossible. The Sidi, emboldened by his success, attacked Underi and drove out the Maratha garrison. A naval engagement ensued between the Moghul and the Maratha fleets. The Maratha sailors fought their ships bravely, but the superior build of the Moghul ships enabled Sidi Kasim to win a decisive victory. The Marathas lost several vessels and some 500 killed and wounded besides prisoners. At last they fled in great disorder back to Rajapur creek. Early in March 1680, the English again opened negotiations with Shivaji. He was now free from anxiety as regards Sambhaji. Bijapur had been saved. His recent ill success at sea had shown him the value of an English alliance. He made peace with the English and he agreed that they might, if thereto compelled, shelter the Moghul fleet during the monsoon. The English on their part undertook to prevent the Sidi from using Bombay as a naval base against the Marathas.

Shivaji at this time had reached the zenith of his power. He had freed the bulk of the Marathi-speaking people. By his new alliance with Bijapur and Golconda and still more by the chain of fortresses which he had built from Bednur to Tanjore, he had secured his conquests. Nevertheless he was not without grave anxieties. His eldest wife Saibai was dead and her son Sambhaji had shown himself unfit for the throne. His third wife Soyarabai, the mother of his second son Rajaram, pressed the latter's claims as superior to those of Sambhaji. The king, distracted by her importunity, conceived the idea of dividing his kingdom between his two sons.<sup>1</sup> At the same time he was grieved by the attitude of Vyankoji, his brother. In his first feelings of gratitude, the latter had acted with courtesy towards Hanmante.<sup>2</sup> But the declaration by the Bijapur government that Vyankoji was Shivaji's vassal preyed on his mind. He refused to see Hanmante or to dispose of any administrative work. And gradually he adopted the habits of a religious recluse. Hanmante reported Vyankoji's conduct to Shivaji, who sent to him an admirable letter.<sup>3</sup> In it he encouraged his brother, urged him to accept his present situation and bade him use his army to conquer fresh lands for himself.

<sup>1</sup> *Shedgavkar and Sabhasad Bakhars*

<sup>2</sup> Grant Duff, Vol. I, p. 294.

<sup>3</sup> *Shedgavkar Bakhars*.

Shortly after writing this letter, Shivaji seems to have had a premonition that his end was approaching. He visited Ramdas at Parah and spoke to him sadly of the rivalry of Rajaram and Sambhaji. The saint bade him do his utmost to reconcile them and to pray to the god Rama for guidance. Shivaji then asked Ramdas to pardon him for any faults that he might unwittingly have committed. Ramdas noticed the gravity with which Shivaji spoke and asked him what ailed him. Shivaji embraced Ramdas and told him that this was their last meeting. Ramdas tried to cheer the king and asked him gently whether such thoughts were the fruits of his teaching. Shivaji did not reply, but bidding the saint farewell made his way to Raygad.<sup>1</sup> On March 28, 1680, after his return from a raiding expedition,<sup>2</sup> a painful swelling appeared on his knee- joint. In spite of medical aid it grew worse. Fever intervened and after a seven days' illness the great king, on April 3, 1680, died at Raygad. His son, Sambhaji, deeply affected by the news of his father's illness, made a desperate effort to see him before his death. Setting out from Panhala on a camel he rode night and day, but he came too late. His father's spirit left his war-worn frame as Sambhaji reached the foot of the hill. Furious with grief and disappointment, the prince drew his sword and with a single stroke decapitated the camel. Not satisfied with this, he ordered the image of a headless camel to be erected at the outer gate of the fort, as a warning to other beasts of the same species. It stands to this day, a monument of the prince's childish folly.

Shivaji has by a curious fate suffered more at the hands of historians than any other character in history. They have one and all<sup>3</sup> accepted as final the opinion of Grant Duff, which again was based on that of Khafi Khan. They have at the same time rejected Orme's far more accurate conclusions. And while judging Shivaji with the utmost harshness, they have been singularly indulgent to his enemies. The thousand basenesses of Aurangzib, the appalling villainies of the Bijapur and the Ahmadnagar nobles, have been passed over with a tolerant smile. The cruel trick by which Ghorpade betrayed Shahaji has provoked no comment. Shivaji, however, is depicted as the incarnation of successful perfidy, a Cæsar Borgia to whom there came no ill fortune, a more faithless and more daring Francesco Sforza. Nor can it be denied that the authors of the Hindu *Bakhars* are in some way responsible for this absurd and inaccurate legend. Hating the Muslims with the fiercest of passions, they deemed no trap too inhuman provided that it brought about their enemies' downfall. It was reserved for an Indian of modern times, M. G. Ranade, a man truly great, judged by no matter what standard, to see correctly the deep religious feeling, the many virtues, the chivalrous temper and the vast ability of the great Maratha king.

<sup>1</sup> *Ramdas Charitra*

<sup>2</sup> *Maasuri L'alamgiri*, Elliott and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 305.

<sup>3</sup> I have seen the image and been told the story at Raygad.

<sup>4</sup> From this statement I gladly except Mr. Rawlinson's admirable monograph on Shivaji. For Orme's character, see Appendix.

If Shivaji had been a treacherous assassin, such as he has been commonly portrayed, he would never have achieved what he did. The high-born, high-spirited Deccan nobles would never have accepted his leadership, or if they had, they would have copied their leader and become as treacherous as he. The fact that no one ever betrayed Shivaji is strong evidence that he himself was not a betrayer. Starting with this premise, Ranade next examined the evidence and pointed out that with one exception the instances of treachery mentioned by Grant Duff were all capable of innocent interpretation. The capture of Purandar was effected by the consent of the garrison and the subsequent acquiescence of the commandants. The killing of Afzul Khan was an act of self-defence. The one exception was the attack on Chandra Rao More. Later investigation, however, has shown that even this instance had not the sinister character usually attributed to it. From the recently discovered Mahableshwar account, it is clear that Shivaji repeatedly strove to win More to his side, that More as often tried treacherously to take Shivaji prisoner and that he eventually fell in a quarrel between him and Ragho Ballal Atre, while the latter was delivering him an ultimatum. Shivaji was thus clearly innocent of More's death. The most that can be said against him is that he did not punish Ragho Ballal as he should have done. But the same charge can be brought against William III. His most ardent admirers have been forced to admit that he punished neither the murderers of the De Witts nor those guilty of the slaughter of the Macdonalds of Glencoe.

It is difficult, without writing in a strain that may seem exaggerated to English readers, to give to Shivaji the place in history to which he is rightly entitled. He has been compared, not unhappily, with Bruce. Nevertheless the comparison does the eastern prince less than justice. Bruce had, it is true, to cheer the spirit of the Scottish nation, depressed by the defeat of Falkirk and the capture and death of Wallace. But the Scottish people had been free for centuries. Naturally high-spirited and brave, they were eager to gather round anyone who would help them drive out the hated English. Shivaji had to create his victorious army from the half savage hillmen of the western ghats, wholly ignorant of war, and from the Marathas of the plains, broken by three hundred years of servitude. To Shivaji's warlike genius were joined civil talents of the highest order. While training troops, devising strategy, inventing tactics, scouring the Deccan in every direction, he yet found time to think out a system of administration which, as Ranade has pointed out, is the basis of British success. The curse of Indian governments had always been the power of the feudal nobility, which grew dangerous directly the central authority weakened. Shivaji was wise enough not only to see the disease, but to invent a remedy. He refused to make grants of land to his nobles. He governed his territories by means of paid agents, *kamavisdars*, *mahalkaris* and *subhedars*. They could be dismissed at will and were so dismissed on proof of incapacity or insubordination. They collected the assessment due from the peasants and paid it into the royal treasury. From the treasury Shivaji paid

his soldiers and officers regular salaries. It was not, however, possible for a single man, however able, to check all the accounts which such payments and receipts involved. Shivaji therefore created two ministers. The first was the *Pant Amatya* or Finance Minister. The second was the *Pant Sachiv* or, as we should call him, the Accountant-General.

Besides these two ministers Shivaji nominated six others, who helped him in his general administration. They also, curiously enough, had duties similar to modern members of the Indian government. The Peshwa was the President of the Council. The *Mantri* was the Home Member. The *Senapati* was the Commander-in-Chief. The *Sumant*<sup>1</sup> was the Foreign Minister. Besides the above, there were the *Panditrao* who was in charge of ecclesiastical matters, and the *Sarnyayadhish* or Chief Justice. To say no merit, however great, enables a man to bequeath his charge to his son. In the same way Shivaji would not permit sons to succeed their fathers in office, unless themselves fully qualified. Nor would he allow men to retain posts which they were incompetent to fill. So wise indeed were these provisions, that they were beyond the grasp of Shivaji's successors. They once more let office become hereditary. They granted great landed fiefs to which incompetent men succeeded because they were their father's sons. Their folly had its reward and in the end Shivaji's kingdom went the way of other eastern empires.

Shivaji was also shrewd enough to see that light assessments were the secret of large revenues. While in the neighbouring states the peasant was lucky if he escaped with an assessment of 50 per cent, Shivaji never demanded more than two-fifths of the gross yield. *Tagai*, or advances by the government to the cultivators, often wrongly believed to be a modern institution, were freely granted, and their repayment was extended over several years. While taxing the peasantry, Shivaji, unlike his neighbours, realized that in return for taxes they were entitled to protection. He divided his kingdom into fifteen districts, all amply provided with great fortresses. They were close enough together for their garrisons to assist each other and drive away marauding bands. They also afforded shelter to which the cultivators could take their cattle or their crops upon the first appearance of the enemy.

The government of these forts was admirably conceived. The commandant was a Maratha. Under him was a Brahman *subhedar* or *sabnis* who kept the accounts and had civil and revenue charge of the villages assigned to the upkeep of the fort, and a Prabhu *karkhanis* who was responsible that the garrison had ample military supplies and food stores. Thus, although the garrison was under the orders of the commandant, and treachery on his part would at once have become known to his chief subordinates. The soldiers of the garrison were paid regular salaries and every tenth man was a *naik*, or corporal, who received a slightly higher emolument. Where

<sup>1</sup> To-day the Viceroy combines the offices of President of the Council and Foreign Minister.

villages were not assigned to the upkeep of any fort, Shivaji for administrative purposes arranged them much as the British since have done. The unit was the *mahal* or *taluka*, of which the revenue varied from Rs. 75,000 to Rs. 1,25,000. Three *mahals* made a *subha* or district. Each district was in charge of a *subhedar*, whose pay was 400 *hons* a year, or about Rs. 100 a month.

Shivaji's military establishment was organized with the same care and skill as the garrisons of his fortresses. A battalion of 1,000 men under a *hazari* was the infantry unit.<sup>1</sup> This was divided into ten companies, called *jumalas*, each under a *jumaledar*. Each company was divided into half companies of fifty men, each under a *havildar* or sergeant. Each half company was divided into five bodies of ten sepoys, of which the chief was the *naik* or corporal. Seven such battalions formed a brigade, under a *sarnobat* or brigadier. The cavalry system was slightly different. The unit was a cavalry regiment 1,250 strong. Its commander was, like the infantry commander, called a *hazari*. The regiment was divided into ten *jumalas*, or squadrons of 125 troopers. Each *jumala* was subdivided into five sections or *havalas* consisting of 25 *bargirs* or troopers. Each such section had its own farrier and water-carrier. Five *hazaris* formed a cavalry brigade, under a brigadier known as the *panch hazari*. The pay of these officers was carefully regulated. The brigadiers received 2,000 *hons* a year, or Rs. 500 a month. In the cavalry the regimental commander's pay was 1,000 *hons* a year, or Rs. 250 a month. In the infantry the battalion commander received 500 *hons*, or Rs. 125 a month. The pay of the company commander and his subordinates varied from Rs. 9 to Rs. 3 a month. The pay of the squadron commanders and their subordinates varied from Rs. 20 to Rs. 6. During the rainy season the troops and horses were fed at the king's expense in large barracks. In the fair season they were expected to live on the enemy's country. But no private looting was allowed. All prize-money or other plunder had, under pain of the forfeiture of his surety bonds, to be paid by its captor into the regimental treasury. From it the commanders fed and furnished their troops.

But, great organizer and military genius that Shivaji was, it is in far-seeing statesmanship that he stands supreme. In all history there is no such example of modesty in the face of continued success. The insolent, overweening vanity which has proved the ruin of so many commanders, both in ancient and modern times, found no place in Shivaji's admirably balanced mind. He won victory after victory against Bijapur and the Moghuls, yet his head was never turned. He realized always that he had yet to meet the full power of the Moghul empire. His one aim was to secure the freedom of his countrymen. That he might do so, he sought to win the friendship of Aurangzib. When that proved impossible, he resolved to secure a place of shelter against the coming peril which he so clearly foresaw. At last there came a time when his genius bore fruit. Four years after Shivaji's

<sup>1</sup> Ranade, op. cit.



death, the emperor realized that the Marathas were a serious danger. He ceased to send a succession of small armies to Aurangabad. He mobilized the whole military resources of northern India and an army several hundred thousand strong, led by the emperor in person, poured through the Vindhya passes to the conquest of the south. Within three years both Golconda and Bijapur had fallen. Within five years all Maharashtra was overrun. Sambhaji had been taken and executed. Shahu and his mother were prisoners in Aurangzib's camp. But the Maratha generals, headed by Rajaram, adhered to the strategy laid down by the great king. Filling behind the southern line of fortresses, built by Shivaji from Bednur to Tanjore, they held the south against the might of all Hindustan. At length the great offensive weakened. The Maratha captains in their turn began to attack. Slowly but surely they drove the Delhi forces back again across the frontier of the old imperial possessions. At last Aurangzib, his treasury empty, his grand army destroyed, died a broken man in his camp at Ahmadnagar. Maharashtra was free. Southern India was safe. The single wisdom of the great king, dead twenty-seven years before, had supplied the place of two hundred battalions.

But there was yet another side to the character of this versatile prince. In an earlier chapter I have sketched his relations with Ramdas and Tukaram. But they were not the only wise and pious men to whom Shivaji was drawn. The poet Mahipati has, in the *Bhaktirajaya*, told the story how the great king went from Pandharpur into the woods to visit an Ujjain mendicant called Ganeshnath. Shivaji made Ganeshnath return with him to his camp and gave him a soft bed with rich coverlets to sleep upon. But the mendicant shamed the king by strewing pebbles over the downy mattress. Shivaji took the lesson so to heart that he sold the couch and gave its price in charity, sleeping ever afterwards on a village cot. Other friends of Shivaji were Keval Bharati of Kenjal, Taponidhi Devbharati of Khandesh and Siddheshwarbhat of Chakar. He even extended his favour to a Muslim fakir named Bava Yakub. Such was the liberator of the Maratha nation, a man of talents so varied, of life so regular, of disposition so tolerant, that it is little wonder that his countrymen came to regard him not as one of themselves but as the incarnation of a god. His kingdom has long passed away; but the Maratha people still worship his image at Raygad and Malwan, just as the Athenians, long after their empire had ceased to exist, continued to worship with pathetic devotion the memory of Theseus.

Shivaji was, in all, married seven times. His first wife, Saibai, was the daughter of Vithoji Mohite Newaskar. An affectionate and charming lady, she became by a curious freak of fortune the mother of the headstrong and wayward Sambhaji. Happily for her, she died too soon to see her baby grow into a vicious and headstrong man. She bore also to Shivaji a daughter named Ambikabai who was given in marriage to Harji Raje Mahadik of Tarale, appointed by the king to be governor of Jinji. Shivaji's second wife was Putalibai. She bore him no children and, faithful unto death, committed *sati* upon





RAJA SAMBHARJI (Shivaji's eldest son)

her husband's funeral pyre. Shivaji's third wife was Soyarabai, a girl of the Shirke family. Beautiful, talented and politic, she was the mother of the brave and chivalrous Rajaram, the second founder of the Maratha empire. She had a daughter named Dipabai who married a Maratha noble named Visajirao. Shivaji's fourth wife was Sakwarbai whose only daughter Kamaljabai became the wife of Janoji Palkar. Shivaji's fifth wife, Lakshmbai, had no issue. Shivaji's sixth wife, Sagunabai, bore him a single daughter Nanibai whom he gave in marriage to Ganoji Raje Shirke Malekar. His seventh wife Gunvantabai was childless.<sup>1</sup>

The great king's body was cremated at Raygad which, looking down on a hundred lesser peaks, formed a fitting resting place for that commanding spirit. His death is a convenient point at which to end this chapter. In the succeeding chapters it will be my task to narrate how the great edifice founded by his genius prospered or decayed with the various fortunes of his successors.

## CHAPTER XIV

### SAMBHAJI'S ACCESSION

A.D. 1680 TO 1682

SAMBHAJI seems to have returned to Panhala at once after the burning of Shivaji's body.<sup>2</sup> On his departure from Raygad, Soyarabai, a daughter of the great house of Shirke and the mother of Rajaram, then a youth in his nineteenth year, began to plot to secure for her son the vacant throne. During her husband's lifetime she and her kinsmen had used their influence to remove from the succession Sambhaji, as one unfitted by his evil habits and proved treachery to rule over the Marathas. After the king's death she took more vigorous action. She worked on the minds of her late husband's advisers and nobles by stating that Shivaji had before his death made an oral will, wherein he had bequeathed to Rajaram the kingdom and had ordered Sambhaji's imprisonment. During the early years of Rajaram's reign, she would help him to govern the kingdom and would be aided by the advice of the *Asht Pradhan* or Eight Ministers. Having thus tempted the ministers with the increase of power that such a plan would give them, she next roused their fears by painting in vivid colours the great dangers that hung over the kingdom. Aurangzib had heard with infinite satisfaction the news of the great king's death and was

<sup>1</sup> This passage is based upon the genealogical tree of the Shedgavkar Bhosles. The Phaltan State records refer to yet another daughter, Sakhubai, married to Mahadji Naik Nimbalkar (*Itihas Sangraha*, Vol. VIII).

<sup>2</sup> The *Chitnis Bakhar* relates that Shivaji's death was hidden from Sambhaji. The local tradition at Raygad, which I have followed, is that Sambhaji heard the news and rode with all speed to Raygad, arriving there too late to see his father alive.

about to lead into the Deccan the whole power of Hindustan and subdue at once Maharashtra, Golconda and Bijapur. In such troubled times was not the first matter for consideration the welfare of the State, rather than the claims of a prince whose past conduct showed his unfitness to cope with the coming danger? So deep, however, was the attachment felt by the Maratha nobles and the ministers to the house of Bhosle, that it was only with great reluctance and grave misgivings that they joined in the plot. Had it been executed with speed and secrecy it might have succeeded, but the lack of goodwill in most of the conspirators foredoomed it to failure. Instead of at once seizing Sambhaji's person, they wrote a number of letters to various commanders to inform them of the queen's decision and to direct them to move their troops to favourable situations. The late king's secretary, Balaji Avaji, was ordered to write the letters. He refused, and he was with difficulty induced to consent to his son Avaji writing them.

Among the letters sent was one to Janardanpant Hanmante, Raghunath Hanmante's brother, who had distinguished himself in the Carnatic, to move his troops from Kolhapur and to attack Panhala. Kanhoji Bhadwalkar, the commandant of Raygad, closed the fort gates, and a force of ten thousand men was collected at Pachad, the village below Raygad, wherein Jijabai had passed several years. Lastly letters were sent to Bahirji Ingle, Somaji Banki and Hiroji Farzand, the principal officers at Panhala, calling upon them to seize the prince's person. But by this time the news of the plot had reached Sambhaji's ears. The common soldiers at Panhala were devoted to the great king's son. At his orders they arrested first the messenger Khandoji Naik, who had carried the letters, and then Ingle, Banki and Hiroji Farzand. The prisoners were confronted and questioned. They confessed, and were at once put in chains. Hiroji Farzand was so fortunate as to break from his cell and escape to Chiplun with a bag of jewelry. He was, however, taken later and again imprisoned. The others were tried and convicted. Banki was afterwards thrown from the top of Raygad. Surajji Kank, a kinsman of Yesaji Kank, the friend of Shivaji's childhood, was beheaded on the spot. Sambhaji was now in undisputed possession of the fortress and rapidly put it in a state of defence. This done, he awaited with confidence the arrival of Janardanpant Hanmante. In the civil war that general showed none of the talents that had earned for him in the Carnatic the great king's commendation. He moved so slowly that Sambhaji's preparations had been completed several days before his arrival. Thankful perhaps for an excuse to take no active steps against the son of his late sovereign, he arranged his troops so as to invest Panhala and returned to Kolhapur. To adopt such a course was to court disaster. In the general's absence, the prince won over his subordinates. The bulk of the army declared for him. He crowned his success by marching at night with the Panhala garrison and seizing Janardanpant Hanmante in his headquarters at Kolhapur. On hearing the news, the Raygad conspirators lost their heads and vied with each other in their haste to betray the plot. Sambhaji marched straight

on Raygad. There Sarnobat and Yesaji Kank declared for him and opened the postern gate for Sambhaji to enter. He arrested the commandant, Kanhoji Bhadwalkar, who at once changed sides. Moro Pingle the Peshwa and Annaji Dattu the *Pant Sachiv* were arrested and their houses sacked. At the same time the force at Pachad declared for Sambhaji and confined Mal Savant the general in command. He was beheaded with ten to fifteen of his staff, under Sambhaji's orders. The garrison of Raygad was changed and Rajaram taken into custody. So far Sambhaji had done no more than the heinousness of the crime demanded. His further conduct was prompted by cruelty and spite. In a storm of passion he entered Soyarabai's private room and in the presence of his soldiers and her maid-servants charged her with having poisoned Shivaji to secure the throne for her son. He then had some bricks removed from the wall of her house and had her built in, in the same way that the king of Bijapur had walled in his own grandfather Shahaji. The aperture left by a single unplaced brick gave her air to breathe. Milk was the only food allowed her. After three days she died and her body was burnt close to where Shivaji's had been. Two hundred other Maratha nobles suspected of participation in the plot were either beheaded or thrown from the edge of Raygad into the Konkan.

The prince, busy in establishing his authority over the whole kingdom, did not celebrate his accession until the 10th of the bright half of *Magh*, *Shaka* 1602 (February 1681). After the date had been pronounced auspicious by the royal astrologers, Sambhaji went in person to Parali fort to invite to the ceremony his father's friend, Ramdas. But the old saint had heard of the cruelties that had marked his seizure of power, and to mark his displeasure at such conduct in a son of the great king, pleaded ill-health and refused to see the prince. His disciples, however, begged him to send Sambhaji a letter of advice, such as he had in the early days of their friendship sent once or twice to Shivaji. Ramdas consented and sent Sambhaji the following finely worded letter:—

'Be always on your guard and never off your guard. Control your temper and be tender and kind towards others. Forgive your subjects their faults and bind them to your person by making them happy. The happier they are, the easier will be your task. If they are against you, your task will be hard. If you and your nobles fall out, your enemies will profit. Let all of you live in unity. Seek out your Musulman enemies and remove them from your path. Create fear in others not by your cruelty but by your valour. Otherwise your kingdom will be in danger. Deal with each difficulty as it arises. Keep your anger under control or at least do not betray it in the presence of others. Make your subjects your friends. Let them love rather than fear you. Make the people one; fill their minds with the single thought of resisting the *Mleccha*. Guard what you already have; add to it by your own exertions and so extend on all sides the kingdom of Maharashtra. Respect yourself and wear the sword of ambition. That way lies the path to success.

Bear King Shivaji in mind Deem your life a worthless trifle and try to live by your fame both in this world and the next for ever. Keep before your eyes the image of Shivaji. Think always of his valour and his deeds Remember always what he did in battle and how he acted towards his friends Give up sloth and love of ease Keep before your eyes a certain goal and strive to win it Never forget how Shivaji won the kingdom If you call yourself a man, try and do better even than he did <sup>1</sup>

Sambhaji took in excellent part the advice contained in Ramdas letter He gave the messenger a gift of clothes and a verbal message for the saint that he would act as he directed Later he sent Ramdas a written invitation to the coronation and the old man, flattered at the prince's reply, accepted it He did not, however, go in person to Raygad, but sent a disciple Divakarbh. <sup>2</sup> to represent him The ceremonial adopted for Sambhaji's coronation resembled that of Shivaji The king weighed himself against gold, silver, brass, iron, cotton, salt, nuts, coco-nuts, molasses and sugar and distributed them as gifts Royal salutes were fired from every fort in the kingdom Moro Pingale, Yesaji Farzand, Somaji Farzand and other conspirators who had not been executed, were released Forty thousand Brahmans were given food and money, and so great was the crush of spectators that many were trampled under foot and killed But in spite of the seeming splendour of the festival, there were not wanting—so the Maratha chroniclers relate—clear signs of divine displeasure The sun hid its face behind a bank of clouds and never once lent its rays to brighten the spectacle On leaving his throne the king drove out to kill the *Kalpurusha*, or God of Death; as he did so, the pole of his carriage broke Sambhaji, undismayed, had the pole mended and ended the coronation to the satisfaction of the nobles, by increasing the *tamats* or official retinues of *subhedars*, *mujumdars* and similar officers of his government <sup>3</sup>

The first campaign of the new king was in his father's best manner In May 1680, the emperor had sent for the second time Khan Jehan, formerly known as Bahadur Khan Koka, as viceroy to the Deccan So incompetent had been his first tenure of office that he had in 1672 allowed Shivaji to extort a ransom from Golconda Anxious to justify the emperor's indulgence, Khan Jehan attacked Ahivant, a fort in the Chandod range, taken by Shivaji some months before He failed in the attempt The lateness of the season prevented further hostilities, but Sambhaji sent the Moghul general a challenge to meet him in the open field after the rains had abated At the Dasara festival, early in October 1680, the Maratha horse in three divisions moved out to make good the Maratha sovereign's threat <sup>4</sup> One division moved towards Surat, one into Khandesh, a third skirmished

<sup>1</sup> *Ramdas Charitra*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Divakar Gosavi or Divakarbhata looked after Ramdas' affairs. He came from Mahabaleshwar, where his descendants still live

<sup>3</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar*

<sup>4</sup> J. N. Sarkar, *Aurangzib*, Vol. IV, p. 244.

with the imperial troops near Khan Jehan's camp at Aurangabad. These operations, however, were subordinate to Sambhaji's design of celebrating his accession by the sack of a great Moghul city. Immediately after his coronation, the king collected the three divisions and set out as if to plunder the Berar province. Suddenly turning back, he led his troops by forced marches to Burhanpur, the capital of Khandesh and the wealthiest town in the Deccan viceroyalty. In the middle of February 1681,<sup>1</sup> the Maratha horse were visible on the sky-line to the sentries on the walls. The commandant, whose garrison numbered only 250, dared not face the Maratha army and withdrew into the citadel. There he gallantly resisted all attempts to scale it. But the town and its ample suburbs of Bahadurpur and Hasanpur lay at the king's mercy. So unexpected was the attack, that the merchants had no time to flee with their jewels and money. A vast booty fell into the hands of the Marathas, who destroyed all that they could not conveniently carry off. Picked runners had carried the news of this disaster to Khan Jehan, who hastened to the relief of the plundered town. In twenty-four hours he covered three days' marches and so exhausted his forces that he was compelled to rest them at Fardapur, sixty-four miles from Burhanpur. Profiting by his inactivity, the Maratha divisions retreated through Chopra to Salher. The Maratha raid and the inefficiency of Khan Jehan's pursuit so enraged the citizens of Burhanpur, that they wrote to the emperor an account of their misfortunes and to emphasise it they discontinued the mention of his name in their Friday prayers, thus threatening to renounce their allegiance to a sovereign who did so little to protect them. Aurangzib, deeply affected by the letter, recalled Khan Jehan and resolved to go in person to the Deccan.

The real cause, however, of this strange resolve must be sought in northern India. Raja Jaswant Singh, the ruler of Jodhpur, had during his life been one of the chief pillars of the Moghul throne. In 1679 the emperor had sent him with reinforcements to Kabul. Shortly after reaching it, the Raja died. The Rajput nobles in his train sent to the emperor word of the prince's death and asked leave to take his sons back to Marwar. In reply Aurangzib ordered that they should be sent to his court, where they would be suitably cared for. The Rajput nobles rightly guessed this order to mean that the boys would be brought up as Musulmans. Exasperated at the emperor's bigotry and ingratitude, they resolved to disobey the Moghul command. They substituted for the young princes two boys of the same age and left them at Delhi. The real princes with their mothers, disguised in men's clothes, they took to Rajputana and appealed for protection to the honour of Mewar. The Rana of Udaipur had given a reluctant submission to the Emperor Jahangir. His successor welcomed gladly a pretext to throw off the yoke of the hated Moghul; and receiving the princes with all honour he gave to

<sup>1</sup> Khafi Khan gives the date as the 15th February. Mr Sarkar puts the date earlier, in the end of January. That, however, clashes with the date of the coronation.



the eldest, Ajit Singh, the hand of his daughter. The emperor sent his son, Prince Azam Shah, to invade Rajputana and followed later with his son Akbar. The Rajputs showed equal skill in battle and intrigue. They destroyed several Moghul battalions in the Aravalli passes and seduced Prince Akbar, Aurangzib's fourth and favourite son, by promising to place on his head the crown of Delhi. The plot was foiled by the skill and cunning of the emperor, who contrived that a letter written by him to Prince Akbar should fall into the hands of his Rajput allies. In it Aurangzib thanked the prince for having won over the Rajputs and directed him to crown his services by bringing them to a spot where they could be mown down by the cannon of both armies!<sup>1</sup>

The Rajput chief believed the lying letter and deserted the prince. Akbar, fleeing to the south with four hundred followers, made his way to Paligad, twenty-five miles from Raygaon (May 28, 1681). There he appealed for help and friendship to the Maratha king.<sup>2</sup> Sambhaji welcomed the royal exile and announced that he would himself seat him on the imperial throne. He gave him a residence near Dhodsa and called it Padshapur. The honours that he paid him were remarkable. He sent his chief officers with a thousand gold mohurs, by way of homage, and publicly declared that he would always stand in the new emperor's presence. Encouraged by their king, the whole countryside did the exile reverence and by August 1680 Akbar had in his own service no less than five thousand Maratha cavalry. Dreading this alliance of Akbar and Sambhaji, Aurangzib hastily patched up a peace with the Rajputs and entered the Deccan, which he was destined never again to leave.

The arrival, however, of Akbar suggested to the supporters of Soyarabai a way of avenging their former discomfiture. Rajaram was too young to be set up as a pretender to the throne. Annaji Dattu and Soyarabai's kinsmen, of the great house of Shirke, saw, as they thought, in Prince Akbar a fitting tool for their intended treason. They offered him the sovereignty of the Maratha Deccan, reserving only a small province as a provision for Rajaram. But Akbar scorned to betray the prince who had befriended him. He disclosed to Sambhaji the plot and the names of the plotters. The Maratha king took a fearful vengeance. He caused to be trampled under the feet of elephants Shivaji's private secretary Balaji Avaji Chitnis<sup>3</sup> and his eldest son, for whom the father in vain offered his own life. He executed several other members of Balaji Chitnis' family, Hiroji Farzand and Annaji Dattu the *Pant Sachiv*; and he proscribed the whole clan of the Shirkes. So many of them were tracked down and massacred by Sambhaji's sepoys, that the word *Shirkan* or 'massacre of the Shirkes' has survived to this day in the Marathi language.

If Prince Akbar really dreamed that the resources of Sambhaji were enough to enable him to overthrow the emperor, the king himself

<sup>1</sup> *Khat-i-Khan.*

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix for Akbar's letter to Sambhaji.

<sup>3</sup> For the Chitnis family tree, see Appendix.

must have known that such dreams came through the ivory gate. In any such attempt he would have been faced by the entire power of Hindustan, the fleets of Janjira and probably the active enmity of Golconda, Bijapur and Portugal. He therefore informed Prince Akbar that before he could march northwards, he must clear his left flank by the conquest of Janjira. Ever since Sambhaji's accession there had been desultory warfare between the Abyssinian garrison of the island and the Marathas. The English, fearing for their factory at Surat, gave to the Abyssinian fleet access to their Bombay harbour, although to Sambhaji they professed neutrality. The Sidis had in Shivaji's time taken Undheri outside Bombay. In May 1681, a force of 200 Marathas had tried to retake the island, but were driven out with great loss. The Abyssinian leaders were so elated at this success that they plundered with perfect impartiality the lands of the English, Marathas and Portuguese alike. In December 1681, Sambhaji came to the shore opposite Janjira with twenty thousand men and a powerful siege train. His guns daily battered down the eastern defences of Janjira while he himself sought, as Alexander had done at Tyre, to build a mole from the mainland to the island. At the same time, one of his officers, Kondaji Farzand, pretended to desert to Janjira with the intention of blowing up the Sidis' magazine on the day fixed by Sambhaji for the assault. The Abyssinians believed Kondaji's tale and welcomed the fugitive. Emboldened by his welcome, he bought some women with whose aid he hoped to corrupt the garrison. These he distributed among the chief officers of Janjira. Unhappily for Kondaji, one of the women had been at some former time the mistress of the officer who now bought her. He extracted from her the story of Kondaji's plot. It was discovered and stamped out with merciless rigour. Farzand was beheaded; his accomplices were flung into the sea and drowned.

On the failure of Kondaji Farzand's plot, Sambhaji renewed his efforts to build the mole and gathered for that purpose no less than fifty thousand workmen. But the Abyssinians held the command of the sea and hampered the work, just as the Tyrian ships had hampered the work of Alexander. Sambhaji, moreover, had to leave the coast to face a Moghul force under Hussein Ali Khan, that was ravaging the northern Konkan. He drove the Moghuls back to Ahmadnagar, whence they had issued, but by the time he had gained this success the monsoon of 1682 had broken; and the monsoon seas destroyed the unfinished mole. In August, Dadaji Raghunath, whom Sambhaji left in command of the besiegers, attempted to land on Janjira. Those who have seen the Arabian Sea in the height of the monsoon can estimate justly the boldness of the attempt. It was pressed with the utmost daring. But the raging sea broke in pieces many of the boats. Others were sunk by the Abyssinian fleet. Those that reached the shore were driven back by the garrison. The Maratha attack failed with a loss of two hundred men. Dadaji Raghunath withdrew his army, but even so did not shake off his misfortunes. The triumphant Abyssinians raided the whole countryside and one night entering Mahad, a village below Mahabaleshwar, of which Dadaji Raghunath was hereditary

*deshpande* or revenue officer, carried off his wife and family to Janjira.

After this disaster Sambhaji realized that without the command of the sea he could not take Janjira. The rest of August and all September he spent in collecting warships and building others. About this time an Abyssinian named Sidi Misri, a relative of Sidi Sambhal, who with Sidi Yakut and Sidi Khairiyat had deposed from his command the Afghan Fatih Khan, deserted to Sambhaji. The king placed him in command of the Maratha fleet, but since Sidi Misri had been reduced for incompetence in Janjira, the choice was not a happy one. Sidi Misri with thirty warships attacked the Janjira fleet outside Bombay. The Janjira vessels only numbered fifteen, but they were commanded by Yakut Khan, the most skilful Indian sailor of his time. The battle ended in a decisive victory for the Abyssinians. Four Maratha warships including Sidi Misri's flagship were taken. Sidi Misri himself, mortally wounded in the fight, was landed in Bombay to die, and the Maratha king once more foiled in his efforts to take Janjira turned his attention to a new danger, the recent alliance between the Moghuls and the Portuguese.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE PORTUGUESE WAR

A.D. 1683 TO 1684

A LONG friendship had united the viceroys of Goa and the emperors of Delhi. Akbar, whose active mind sought to gather into one faith the various truths contained in several, invited Portuguese priests to Fatehpur Sikri, and listened with interest to their preaching and to their contentions with the holy men of Islam. He showed still further his appreciation of the Portuguese by adding to his zenana Maria Mascarenhas<sup>1</sup> and by building for her at Fatehpur Sikri the house, on which can still be seen painted the head and wings of the angel announcing to the Virgin the birth of the Saviour. It occurred to the resourceful brain of Aurangzib that the Portuguese might be induced to let him use Goa as a naval base for the conquest of the Deccan. The Sidis held the command of the sea and with Goa open to the Moghul transports, the emperor would have a second line of communication with the south. In return for the use of their harbours, the emperor offered to let the Portuguese hold whatever they could conquer from the Marathas by their unaided arms. The Portuguese had long

<sup>1</sup> J. A. Ismael Gracias, *Uma dona Portuguesa na corte do grao mogol*, p. 41 *et seq.* I know that the legend of Akbar's Portuguese wife was strenuously refuted by Vincent Smith. But with all deference to that eminent writer, I think that M. Gracias' statement of the case is conclusive. The discussion, however, of this question is outside the scope of this work.

dreaded the rise of the Maratha power; and not realizing that to allow the emperor to make Goa a naval base was possibly to lose it for ever, the viceroy, Francesco de Tavora, *Conde* or Count of Alvor, foolishly agreed to the emperor's proposal.

News of this alliance soon reached Sambhaji. The latter had in January 1683 bribed six Arab warships<sup>1</sup> to attack an East Indiaman, the *President*, commanded by Captain Hyde. But the *President*, admirably sailed by her captain, sank three Arab ships and beat off the others. When the English complained, Sambhaji stoutly denied all knowledge of the incident, and learning the plans of Alvor made peace with the English by granting them trading privileges in Junj. In June 1683, Sambhaji descended the ghats with thirty thousand men and laid siege to the Portuguese fortress at Chaul. But both in attack and defence Sambhaji's engineers were far behind the Portuguese. In the cold weather the initiative passed to the king's enemies, and with twelve hundred Europeans and twenty-five thousand Indians, Alvor ravaged the Maratha territories near Goa. Unable to cope with the Portuguese when covered by the guns of their fortress, Sambhaji planned to lure them into the open country, where his cavalry would be able to act with freedom. To attain this end he sent agents into Goa. They talked openly of a vast store of treasure concealed by the Marathas in Phonda fort, and expressed wonder at the Portuguese not attempting its capture. The viceroy fell into the snare; and with eight hundred Europeans and eight thousand Kanarese sepoys he set out to storm Phonda. The garrison defended itself vigorously, but in ten days the Portuguese siege train had battered to pieces its stone walls. The assault fixed two days later would certainly have carried all before it. At this point Sambhaji appeared to raise the siege. He had fourteen thousand foot and eight thousand cavalry. He soon cut Alvor's communications with Goa and the viceroy's army had either to starve, surrender or retreat. But to retreat in face of a Maratha army was to court disaster. His every step was harassed by charges of horse, while Maratha sharpshooters fired continuously from the hills at the retreating enemy. Alvor left behind him his baggage and his siege train, and before he reached Cumbarim island he had lost two hundred Europeans and a thousand Indian sepoys. At Cumbarim the Goa garrison came out to cover his retreat and a number of boats conveyed his soldiers to safety. Sambhaji's infantry likewise got boats and followed, but the Portuguese, knowing better the reaches of the Goa river, rowed round the island and cut off and destroyed three thousand Marathas who had established themselves on it. In this way the shattered army of Alvor reached in safety the walls of Goa (September 1683).

Sambhaji, however, was not disposed to leave Goa to be the emperor's naval base without a serious attempt to take it. On the advice of Prince Akbar he first tried fraud. The young Moghul had by this time grasped that it was beyond the power of the Maratha king to place him on the throne of Delhi. He was, therefore, anxious

<sup>1</sup> Orme, p. 154.

to go by sea to Persia and take refuge at the shah's court. For this purpose he wished to build a ship in the Goa dockyards and asked for and obtained leave to send workmen to help in the building. His plan was to send daily large bodies of soldiers disguised as labourers and in this way to collect a strong force inside the city. The plot was discovered by Manucci, a Venetian adventurer who happened to be at Goa;<sup>1</sup> and the viceroy frustrated it by insisting that every night all the prince's workmen should leave the town and that next morning the same number only should return. Akbar then made a further attempt on Sambhaji's behalf. He was a friend, so he wrote to Alvor, both of the Portuguese and the Marathas, and before he left India he wished to mediate between them. Let him but enter Goa as arbitrator and he could soon smooth away every difficulty to the satisfaction both of the viceroy and the king. Alvor was at first duped, but he afterwards perceived the Moghul's design. It was to enter Goa with a large escort, attack the garrison and open the gates while the Marathas assaulted the walls from without. The viceroy foiled this second plot by insisting that the prince's escort should not exceed seven men. Unable to succeed by fraud, Sambhaji made vigorous efforts to succeed by force. He overran the provinces of Bardez and Salsette<sup>2</sup> and on the 25th November 1683, took the island of Santo Estavao. The 25th November was the anniversary of Albuquerque's capture of Goa and the population and most of the garrison were celebrating it in the Goanese churches. At 10 p.m. Sambhaji sent across at low tide four thousand men. Taking the garrison by surprise, the Marathas put them to the sword and occupied the island fortress. Next day the viceroy tried to retake it, but the Portuguese were driven back with heavy loss. Several weeks passed in furious attacks by the Marathas and desperate resistance by the Portuguese. The forts of Rachol, Tivim and Chapora fell into Sambhaji's hands and the town of Margoa surrendered. At last it seemed certain that the Maratha army would force a way through that part of Goa known as the quarter of Saint John. Despair seized the soul of the chivalrous Alvor. Death on the field of honour had no terrors for a noble of Portugal. But the fear of losing this ancient possession of his master's house weighed on him deeply and led him to form a strange resolve. Instructing his officers to fight to the last, he called together several monks and with them entered the church of Bom Gesu, wherein lie in splendid state the earthly remains of St Francis Xavier.

This famous man, the scion of a noble Spanish house, was one of the first seven disciples of Ignatius Loyala, the founder of the Jesuits. At first ordered to convert to Christianity the Musulmans of Palestine, Xavier was afterwards chosen by Loyala to be the head of the mission sent by John III of Portugal to convert the east. From 1542 to 1547 he preached in southern India and the Spice Islands and then left for Japan. Death overtook him in 1552 when about to attempt the conversion of China. His body was first sent to

<sup>1</sup> *Storia do Mogor*, Vol. II, p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> This is different from the island of Salsette to the north of Bombay.

Malacca and thence to Goa where either by divine agency or the embalmer's skill, it remains to this day perfectly preserved in the church of Bom Gesu. Xavier's canonization in 1621 by Pope Gregory XV proves the miracles that the saint performed during his lifetime. He was how called upon, long after death, to perform a greater miracle still.

While the ramparts of Goa were resounding with the Marathas' cries of *Har Har Mahadev* and the answering shouts of the gallant Portuguese, the Count of Alvor ordered in the church of Bom Gesu a service in honour of the saint. During the service were recited and played the prayers and music that he once had loved. Then, opening the dead man's tomb, Alvor placed in the hands of the corpse his staff of office and the royal letter by which the king had appointed him viceroy of Goa. In a firm voice the Count declared that St. Francis Xavier and no longer Alvor was now Governor-General of the Portuguese Indies. Earthly arms had failed to defend it, let the saint now shield from harm the *Estado de Goa*.<sup>1</sup> This act performed, Alvor knelt in prayer by Xavier's head, and with many tears and sighs awaited the advent of the miracle. 'What then,' cries a contemporary chronicler, 'were the dispositions of the new viceroy?' In a few moments the hard-pressed garrison saw on the horizon the advancing vanguard of a Moghul army, and after one desperate assault Sambhaji was forced to raise the siege.

The modern reader will look to some cause other than St. Francis Xavier's miraculous powers for the timely arrival of the Moghuls. Late in 1683 the emperor had moved from Burhanpur to Ahmadnagar, intending to make the latter city his headquarters. To his two sons, Shah Alam and Azam Shah, he entrusted large armies. He directed Azam Shah to overrun Khandesh and Nasik and above all, to take Salher, which he soon did, through the treachery of the Maratha commandant. Shah Alam was to harry the south. Directly the siege of Goa began, the viceroy sent Manucci to call to his aid the Moghul fleet that was cruising off Vengurla. The Moghul admiral who had strict orders to prevent Akbar's flight by sea would not leave his post, but he seems to have sent word to Shah Alam of the danger in which Goa stood.

Shah Alam had, in the meantime, crossed the Kistna and entered the Belgaum district. He had stormed Shahpur, a little fort close to Belgaum, and Sampgaon, a town eighteen miles south-east of Belgaum. It was here that the prince seems to have received the message of the Moghul admiral. At once he led his troops through the Ramghat pass, twenty-six miles west of Belgaum, and overcoming a Maratha force sent against him by Sambhaji, then struggling furiously to take Goa, his army poured into Savantvadi and hastened by forced marches to the relief of Alvor. It was the vanguard of this army that the despairing Portuguese saw on the sky line. It must, however, be admitted that the Portuguese were soon almost as

<sup>1</sup> There is an admirable account of this incident in *Uma dona Portuguesa*, p. 88 et seq.

frightened of their heaven-sent allies as they had been of the Marathas. The Moghul commander wished to bring his fleet into the Goa harbour, while his army camped inside the walls. But on the advice of Manucci who, as Shah Alam's doctor, had had a long experience of his patient's<sup>1</sup> character, the viceroy refused the Moghul fleet admission; and by firing on their leading galliots forced them to flee into the river Nerul to the north of the city. Shah Alam revenged himself by plundering Bardez and other Portuguese villages and by carrying off their women and children.

From Goa Shah Alam marched on Vengurla where he burnt a ship belonging to Prince Akbar and sacked the town for having sheltered it. From the surrounding districts he gathered in the cattle, reaped the standing corn and burnt the villages. In this way he soon ate up the Konkan and then realized the folly of his quarrel with the Portuguese. The viceroy no longer allowed the Moghuls to use his harbours. The river Bardez wherein they were forced to discharge their foodstuffs had no facilities, and harassed by the Maratha horse, the victorious army was soon on the verge of starvation. Shah Alam broke his camp and began to retreat along the Konkan shore. His real difficulties now began. Sambhaji's troops were amply supplied from the grain stores in his forts, very few of which Shah Alam had taken. Shah Alam's army had no resources whatever. A pestilence broke out among the starving Musulmans and took a daily toll of five hundred men and of unnumbered horses, elephants and camels. The prince sent a messenger to Aurangzib imploring help. The emperor sent to his relief Ruhulla Khan, the imperial paymaster, with part of the army at first entrusted by him to Azam Shah. After the capture of Salher that prince had in vain tried to take the Maratha fort Ramsej, or Rama's couch. It is on a hill near Nasik, and the divine Rama is supposed to have sometimes slept on it, when living with Sita on the banks of the Godavari. After this failure, Azam Shah had retired to the imperial headquarters. At the same time as

<sup>1</sup> Orme, *Historical Fragments*, p. 171 and *Stories of Mogor*, Vol. II, p. 273. As the names of Aurangzib's sons and daughters are confusing, I shall give their names below.

- |            |   |   |
|------------|---|---|
| Sons       | 1 | Mahomed Sultan. He deserted to Shuja during the war of succession, June 1659. He was thereafter imprisoned until his death on 3rd December 1679.            |
|            | 2 | Mahomed Muazzim or Shah Alam, afterwards the Emperor Bahadur Shah.  |
|            | 3 | Mahomed Azam or Azam Shah, killed in battle against Shah Alam.  |
|            | 4 | Mahomed Akbar. Commonly known as Akbar.   |
|            | 5 | Mahomed Kam Baksh. Commonly called Kam Baksh. Killed in battle against Shah Alam.   |
| Daughters. | 1 | Zebunnissa. She helped Akbar in his rebellion and was imprisoned until her death in 1702.   |
|            | 2 | Zinatunnissa. She succeeded her aunt Jahanara as head of Aurangzib's seraglio and to the title of Begam Sahib. It is she who befriended the youthful Shahu. |
|            | 3 | Mehrunnissa. Married.   |
|            | 4 | Zabdatunnissa.  |
|            | 5 | Badrunnissa. Died unmarried, aged only 22.  |

the emperor sent a force by land, he sent by sea from Surat a fleet of food-ships to relieve his son's immediate wants. Unhappily for the Moghuls the food-ships fell into Maratha hands. The troops, however, under Ruhulla Khan successfully reached their goal. On May 18, 1684, the remnants of Shah Alam's army found the welcome shelter of the walls of Ahmadnagar.

In spite of Shah Alam's retreat, his own failure to take Goa seems to have weighed heavily on the Maratha king's mind. Since the discovery of the Shirke plot, he distrusted his Maratha officers, with the single exception of his cavalry commander, Hambirrao Mohite, a blunt and gallant soldier, whose nature somewhat resembled his own. Unwilling, in view of his great services to Shivaji, to dismiss Moro Pingle from the post of Peshwa, he yet would not give him either power or responsibility. These he gave in full measure to a certain Kalasha, by caste a Kanoja or Kanauj Brahman. He was a member of an obscure clan who lived near Allahabad on the offerings of certain Deccan families. These employed as priests the members of Kalasha's caste, whenever they made pilgrimages to Allahabad or Benares. Among the clients of Kalasha's family were the Bhosles, and Kalasha seems to have been privy to Shivaji's escape from Agra and to have been intimate with Sambhaji, while the latter remained behind at Mathura. With the charming manners of northern India he won a great influence over the young prince, which lasted until his death. Shortly after Sambhaji became king, he made Kalasha his chief executive officer with the titles of Kavi Kalasha, or of Kalasha the poet, and Chandagomatya.<sup>1</sup> But Kalasha, admirably suave and courteous towards his master, was arrogant towards his Maratha colleagues and subordinates and crassly stupid about questions of Deccan administration. He was still less competent to manage the royal possessions in southern India. He tried to hide his incapacity by blaming the diffuseness of the official reports and gave out publicly that the king's power would increase if he abandoned all Shivaji's distant conquests. He used to tell Sambhaji that a kingdom should be like the jewel in a ring, at all times wholly visible to its owner's eye. The Marathas, who hated Kalasha both as a fool and a foreigner, believed that he retained his influence over Sambhaji by charms and magic and by hideous rites in which the blood of cows and buffaloes flowed abundantly. It seems, however, probable that the minister kept and increased his power by the methods commonly used in India by those who wish to subject a prince to their will. He plied Sambhaji with wine, *bhang* and opium, and, as Cardinal Dubois did for the Regent Orleans, he procured for him an endless succession of pretty and lascivious women. But whatever the secret of Kalasha's domination, it was disastrous to the Maratha state. The finances fell into disorder. Shivaji's treasure was exhausted; and unable to pay his troops, Sambhaji gave them leave to plunder

<sup>1</sup> Sarkar, *Aurangzib*, Vol. IV, p. 294.

<sup>2</sup> The meaning of this word is doubtful, but probably it means 'learned in the Vedas'.



at will, thus relaxing the iron discipline by which Shivaji had made his armies formidable. The result was seen in the successes presently gained by the Moghul commanders.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE GREAT MOGHUL OFFENSIVE

#### THE CONQUEST OF BIJAPUR

A.D. 1684 TO 1686

DIRECTLY the rains of 1684 had abated the Moghul armies began to move. Shahabuddin Khan, the father of Nizam-ul-Mulk, of whom much will be read hereafter, advanced with a great force to take Raygad.\* He was burning to achieve distinction, for he had been involved in Azam Shah's failure to take Ramsej. That stronghold had been most gallantly defended. The Moghuls in vain built lofty towers from which to command the interior of the fortress. The commandant, whose name unhappily has not survived, built his walls still higher and repelled every assault. When his cannon wore out he fired leather missiles from the trunks of hollowed-out trees, and when these failed him he drove back the storming parties with showers of stones, burning grass, and old quilts steeped in naphtha and set on fire. Shahabuddin Khan was relieved by Khan Jehan, but neither science nor patience could overcome the dauntless courage of the besieged. At last, baffled by the garrison within and harassed without by Hambirrao Mohite's cavalry, Khan Jehan withdrew his force. Before retiring he burnt Shahabuddin Khan's wooden towers amid the mockery of the Marathas, who begged of him not to run away, but to hide under the ashes of his own edifices.<sup>1</sup> The siege of Ramsej raised, Hambirrao Mohite made a countermove. At Pathdi, some forty miles south-east of Poona, were the emperor's elephant stables. Mohite detached a body of Maratha cavalry who swooped down on Pathdi, killed the garrison, and drove off the entire herd of elephants. Khan Jehan, grasping the importance of their recovery rode night and day after the raiders and in the end recovered all, or nearly all, the missing elephants.<sup>2</sup>

On his way to Raygad Shahabuddin Khan took and garrisoned Chakan and Supa in the Poona district and then descended into the Konkan. A large Maratha force met him at Pachad at the foot of Raygad, but in that hilly tract their cavalry had no room to deploy. They were severely beaten and with the loss of their guns and equipment retreated into the fort. Raygad itself was impregnable; and the Moghul general after magnifying his victory in his despatches to

<sup>1</sup> Scott, *Deccan*; Sarkar, Vol. IV, p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> Scott, *Deccan*.

the emperor, raised the siege. As a reward for his success at Pachad he was given the titles of *Ghazi-ud-din* (the Apostle of the Faith) and *Firoz Jang* (the sapphire of battle).

In February 1685, Sambhaji retaliated sent a body of ten thousand cavalry to plunder Khandesh under Niloji Pandit. This force sacked Dharamgaon<sup>1</sup> and ravaged the neighbourhood, but in its absence Shah Alam moved south and took one after the other Gokak, Hubli, Dharwar and Karwar. In return Sambhaji detached fifteen thousand horse to harass Shah Alam's movements. This duty they did so skilfully that once more Shah Alam had to retreat with the loss of half his army. The forts, however, that he had taken remained in the hands of Moghul garrisons.

Believing that he had for the moment inflicted sufficient losses on the Marathas, and confident from the reports that reached him that Sambhaji, if left to himself, would abandon himself to drink and women, the emperor applied himself to the darling project of his life, namely, the conquest of Bijapur and Golconda. One of the last feats of the great king was to force Diler Khan to raise the siege of Bijapur. Since then there had been no active hostilities between Aurangzib and Masaud Khan, the Bijapur regent. Indeed, both the emperor and his daughter-in-law, Shahr Banu, the wife of Azam Shah, known to the Marathas as Padshah Begam, had in 1681 appealed to the Bijapur general, Sarza Khan, to join in a combined crusade against Sambhaji. But the Adil Shahi government knew well that the destruction of Sambhaji would be followed by their own, and, instead of sending help to Aurangzib, secretly sent every man whom they could spare to the Maratha king's aid. To punish Bijapur, Aurangzib had twice sent Azam Shah to raid its northern territories. But it was not until the 1st April 1685, that the offensive against Bijapur began. The difficulties faced by the invading army were threefold. The Adil Shahi king, Sikandar Shah, had taken over the government himself, and Masaud Khan, the former regent, had retired to Adoni where he hoped to establish an independent state. Rid of this worthless man, Sikandar faced the Moghul invasion with calm courage.<sup>2</sup> He asked for and obtained promises of help from Golconda, where the wise Madannapant was still first minister, and from Sambhaji. On the 14th August 1685, a Golconda force under Ambaji Pandit reached Bijapur and from December 1685, Hambirrao Mohite, with a body of Maratha horse, began to harass the Moghul communications with the north. In October 1685, another body of Maratha cavalry, imitating Shivaji's raid on Surat, appeared suddenly before Broach. This historic city, known to the Greek mariners of Egypt as Barugaza, was one of the most ancient ports of India. Its name is derived from two words, *Bhrigu* and *kaccha*. *Kaccha* means field, and *Bhrigu kaccha* means the field of Bhrigu, the name of the mighty *rishi*, or

<sup>1</sup> Sarkar, Vol IV, p 301.

<sup>2</sup> He sent a spirited letter to Aurangzib demanding the evacuation of his country and the return of the tribute paid by him. On these terms, he said, he would join the emperor against the Marathas. See extract of his letter in Appendix.

seer, who owned it. On one occasion, so it is related, the *rishis* of India, doubtful which one of the Hindu triad they should honour most, sent Bhrigu to visit in person the gods and report to the other *rishis* his impressions. Bhrigu visited in turn Brahmādeva, Shiva and Vishnu. The first, absorbed in the high affairs of heaven, paid but scant heed to the visitor. The angry Bhrigu cursed the god, so that thereafter he received no worship from any of the children of men. Bhrigu next visited Shiva, but was refused admittance. Bhrigu imposed on him the penalty that his image should never be seen in any human temple. Last of all Bhrigu visited Vishnu and found the god asleep. Angered beyond control by the continued disrespect, Bhrigu kicked the slumbering god in the chest. Vishnu awoke and with admirable courtesy clasped the *rishi's* foot to his bosom and paid him the highest honours. The *rishi*, his good humour restored, returned to earth and proclaimed Vishnu the greatest of the triad. This view has since generally prevailed, and the god, to commemorate the incident, wears a jewel over the spot where the *rishi's* foot struck him. It is known as Bhrigulanchan, or Bhrigu's kick.<sup>1</sup>

The reputed holiness of the ancient town proved no defence against the Maratha raiders. They plundered Broach as thoroughly as Shivaji had plundered Surat. With them was Prince Akbar, who hoped from Broach to flee back to Rajputana. The Maratha troops did him public homage as emperor, but their force was too small to cut its way north. On the appearance of a Moghul army from Ahmadabad, led by the viceroy of Gujarat, the Marathas fled back with their plunder to the Deccan.

The chief resource of the Bijapur king was in the undaunted spirit of his people. As early as June 1685 the Bijapur cavalry cut the communications of Azam Shah who was in command of the besieging force. At last, the prince's officers begged him in a council of war to retreat.<sup>2</sup> But the fear that his brother, Shah Alam, might pay him back the cutting jests that he had himself made about Shah Alam's disasters made the prince cling to his post. Aurangzib, approving his son's conduct, determined to open up his son's communications. He himself was at Sholapur and had no provisions to spare. But he ordered Shahabuddin Khan, hereafter known as Firoz Jang, to set out from Ahmadnagar with twenty thousand bullock-loads of grain. The Bijapur government guessed rightly that the fate of their city depended on the failure or success of Firoz Jang. Sarza Khan, and Abdur Raf, with eight thousand horse, threw themselves with the utmost valour on Firoz Jang's convoy. For some time the fate of the relieving force hung in the balance. But Firoz Jang rose to the height of his recent honours. Through his generalship and the

<sup>1</sup> I have met a descendant of Bhrigu, Mr. Munshi, an advocate of the Bombay High Court. This gentleman very kindly added a sequel to the story. When Bhrigu kicked Vishnu he had a *kamal* or lotus on his foot. As a punishment for kicking a god the lotus fell off, ever since, his descendants have lacked the prosperity the lotus denotes.

<sup>2</sup> Sarkar, Vol. IV, p. 316.

stimulating presence of Jani Begam, one of Azam Shah's wives who, from the back of an elephant, cheered on her husband's succours, the convoy reached in safety the headquarters of the besieging army.<sup>1</sup> From this moment the tide turned, and no longer anxious about his son's safety, Aurangzib was able to dam the stream of reinforcements that Madannapant was sending from Golconda.

Against the Kutb Shahi king the imperial government had valid grounds of complaint. He had helped Shivaji in his great southern campaign. Although warned by the emperor of the consequences of such conduct, Abu Hussein had continued to send troops, equipment and supplies to Bijapur. But it was characteristic of Aurangzib that he advanced a wholly different ground. He sent one Mirza Mahomed to demand two giant diamonds which, so the emperor asserted, lay hidden among the Kutb Shahi treasures. With exquisite courtesy Abu Hussein assured the envoy that had he possessed such gems, he would long ago have sent them as a gift to his suzerain. Feiled in this attempt to pick a quarrel, Aurangzib sent without further pretence Khan Jehan and Shah Alam, with large armies to punish Abu Hussein for the aid given by him to Bijapur. Abu Hussein sent Ibrahim Khan with forty thousand men to oppose the Moghul advance.<sup>2</sup> Ibrahim Khan was an officer of high reputation and had the full confidence of Abu Hussein and Madannapant. He made a daring attempt to overwhelm Khan Jehan before Shah Alam could send him help. He manœuvred so skilfully that he at last isolated a body of ten thousand men under Khan Jehan, and with his entire army attacked it in front, flank and rear. Khan Jehan extricated himself by his own skill and courage. He killed in single combat one of the enemy's leading officers. Thereafter he determined to cut his way through the ever-narrowing circle of the Golconda troops. In front he put an elephant belonging to Raja Ramsingh, the son of Jai Singh and Shivaji's companion at Agra. In the elephant's trunk its *mahout* put a heavy iron chain. The sagacious beast used the chain with such terrible effect against the Golconda horsemen that he forced in their ranks a gap, through which Khan Jehan and most of his men succeeded in escaping (March 1686).

Khan Jehan celebrated his escape as if it had been a victory, and sent a glowing account of it to the emperor. But Aurangzib was too skilled a soldier to be deceived, and he reprimanded for their inactivity both the general and the prince. They became more slothful than ever and were soon besieged in their own camp and exposed to the rocket fire of the Kutb Shahi general. But other forces were working in favour of the emperor. Ibrahim Khan and many other Musulman officers of Abu Hussein regarded with envy the favours conferred on Madannapant and on his brother Akannapant. Indeed, it would seem that with the avarice of increasing years they appropriated to themselves large sums from the state coffers.<sup>3</sup> Ibrahim Khan in his hatred of the Brahman brothers, listened readily to proposals made

<sup>1</sup> *Khafi Khan*; Scott, *Deccan*.

<sup>2</sup> Orme, p. 186.

<sup>3</sup> *Khafi Khan*.

to him by Moghul emissaries. Although master of the field he withdrew his troops and allowed Khan Jehan and his army unmolested to leave their camp, and to occupy the fortress of Malkhed, the chief bulwark of the Golconda state. Justly indignant, Abu Hussein recalled Ibrahim Khan to stand his trial. Ibrahim Khan retaliated by openly deserting to Khan Jehan with the larger part of the king's army. Rustum Rao, Madannapant's nephew, was appointed to the chief command and rapidly restored discipline. But Abu Hussein's mind had been so affected by Ibrahim Khan's treachery that one night in June he abandoned Hyderabad, which he had made his capital, and fled to Golconda fort. The flight of the king led to a tumult in the city. The army retreated and fell back on Golconda in disorder. First the criminal classes and then the imperial troops plundered Hyderabad and subjected the inhabitants of both sexes to every kind of barbarity and outrage. Madannapant tried in vain to restore Abu Hussein's courage. But the king's only thought was to make peace with Aurangzib. On reaching Hyderabad, Shah Alam did his best to quell the disorder, and to that prince came the envoys of the trembling monarch. Shah Alam had no wish to be over-harsh to a Musulman sovereign. Still more he feared his father's jealousy, if he took a fortress that had once defied Aurangzib's own arms. He imposed a fine of twelve million rupees and required the cession of Malkhed and the surrounding districts. Madannapant and Akannapant were to be imprisoned and Abu Hussein was publicly to ask of Aurangzib forgiveness for any offence which the imperial fancy might fasten on him.<sup>1</sup> These disgraceful terms were eagerly accepted. In silver chains Abu Hussein appeared in his oppressor's camp, and prostrating himself in the dust, implored and obtained pardon for numerous crimes, very few of which he had committed.<sup>2</sup> In regard to Madannapant, Akannapant and their nephew, a zenana intrigue forestalled the imperial wishes. Some women in Abu Hussein's harem sent to their houses a band of assassins and all three fell stabbed by the murderers' knives. Their heads were sent with many compliments to the prince's camp. By treating with some leniency Abu Hussein, Shah Alam escaped the jealousy of the emperor. Nevertheless he incurred the censure of the commander-in-chief. Aurangzib sent for both Shah Alam and Khan Jehan and reprimanded them for not completing the conquest of the kingdom (October 1686).

The left flank of the imperial army was now safe from the attacks of Golconda. Sambhaji's inactivity secured the safety of the emperor's right flank. Aurangzib, therefore, could concentrate his energies on the reduction of Bijapur. It took some months for Shah Alam to extort from the wretched Abu Hussein the large indemnity which he had agreed to pay. But in June 1686 all that could be squeezed out of Golconda had been paid into the emperor's treasury and the Moghul army of occupation, now under the sole command of Shah Alam,<sup>3</sup> joined Aurangzib's camp outside Bijapur. But the prince was

<sup>1</sup> *Khafr Khan.*

<sup>2</sup> Khan Jehan had been disgraced.

<sup>3</sup> Orme, p. 188.

in no humour to work cordially either with his father or his brother Azam Shah. The censures of the former and the gibes of the latter rankled deeply, and in order to cheat them of the glory of conquest Shah Alam opened secret negotiations with the Adil Shahi king, Sikandar. The prince's envoy was one Shah Kuli. Sikandar's envoy was one Sayad Alam. But Shah Kuli was fond of forbidden liquor and in his cups boasted that shortly his arts would reduce Bijapur. His words were soon reported to Ruhulla Khan, the head of the military police, who repeated them to Aurangzib. Shah Kuli was arrested. Under torture he named his accomplices and among them the prince. Shah Alam repudiated the charge, and as even the emperor could hardly order the torture of a prince of the blood, the emperor released, but entirely ceased to trust him. Sikandar Shah next tried an appeal to the emperor's religious feelings and sent his best theologians to convince Aurangzib that to fight against a true believer was opposed to the teachings of Islam. But Aurangzib's religion was always under the control of his political ambitions and he skilfully retaliated by charging Sikandar with his alliance with the infidel Marathas. If Sikandar would join him in a crusade against Sambhaji, Aurangzib would at once raise the siege of Bijapur. Sikandar knew that even so he would not save his kingdom and hoped against hope that Sambhaji would, as Shivaji had done before, lead a Maratha army to his rescue. He therefore continued the defence with unabated vigour.

The chief obstacle to the besiegers was now the moat round the city. It was deep and full of water; and in every direction it was guarded by flanking towers. The emperor's aim was to fill it up with earth, but so deadly was the musketry fire from the walls that no labourers could be hired for the duty. At last by offering a gold coin for a single basket of earth he was able to proceed with the work. But earth was not the only material used. Dead cattle, horses and men were hurled into the moat; and many an unfortunate labourer who had earned a few gold coins was robbed of his gains and thrown in alive by his brother workmen.<sup>1</sup> At last the perseverance of the emperor and the skill of his engineers caused Sikandar Shah to despair. His garrison now numbered only a handful. In September he opened negotiations with Aurangzib and on the 12th September 1686,<sup>2</sup> the famous city surrendered. Aurangzib entered it in triumph and at first affected to treat Sikandar Shah with liberality. But in later years the deposed king must often have regretted that he had not trusted to the chances of war, desperate though they were, rather than to the generosity of his conqueror. Instead of the high office promised him by Aurangzib, he was given a dungeon in the fortress of Daulatabad. After some years he was released and dragged about from place to place, a prisoner in the camp of the emperor. In 1700, when only thirty-two, he died during the siege of Satara fort. The

<sup>1</sup> Sarkar, Vol. IV, p. 322

<sup>2</sup> This is the date given by Mr Sarkar. *Khafī Khan* gives October as the month of the surrender.

tide had then begun to turn and the failure of the Moghul offensive was imminent. It was therefore not unfitting that then, too, Aurangzib should lose the pleasure he derived from the sorrows of his captive.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE GREAT MOGHUL OFFENSIVE

#### THE CONQUEST OF GOLCONDA

A.D. 1686 TO 1687

THE conquest of Bijapur led indirectly to another event fortunate for the emperor, the flight of Prince Akbar. The imperial victories and the sloth of Sambhaji so weighed on the prince's mind that he resolved to flee from the Deccan, wherein success seemed impossible and danger imminent. In October 1686, he and Sambhaji parted without regret. At Rajapur the prince hired a vessel commanded by an Englishman called Bendal,<sup>1</sup> and by bribing Sidi Yakut Khan of Janjira, succeeded in evading the sea patrols established by the emperor to prevent his escape. Akbar's destination was Persia, but adverse winds drove him to Muscat. The sultan welcomed him courteously, but detained him and sent with all speed a messenger to Aurangzib, offering to betray the fugitive for two lakhs of rupees and the exemption of Muscat ships from the Surat customs duties. The emperor readily agreed, and sent one Haji Fazil, an old naval captain, to secure Prince Akbar. Happily for him the king of Persia had heard of his plight and under threat of instant war forced the treacherous Arab to surrender his prey. Akbar made his way to the Persian court, where Shah Sulaiman, and after him his son Shah Hussein, showed him a generous and unwearied kindness. Akbar spent many years at Khorasan, waiting vainly for his father's death. But the great age to which the emperor lived defeated his ambition, and in 1706, when Akbar breathed his last, Aurangzib was still alive.

In spite of his treaty with Abu Hussein and the latter's real efforts to keep it, Aurangzib had no sooner conquered Bijapur than he determined to conquer Golconda. He called a council of war, ostensibly to consider in which direction the imperial armies should move. Shah Alam, who had signed the treaty with Abu Hussein, proposed the reduction of Sambhaji. However, Kam Baksh, Aurangzib's youngest son, acting on his father's instructions proposed the immediate conquest of Golconda. Shah Alam protested that such a course would be a stain on his own honour, and added that the loss of a son's honour involved the loss of his father's. But the word 'honour' had no meaning for Aurangzib. The protest, delivered in a spirited tone, roused the emperor's anger. He publicly reprimanded the prince and threatened him with lifelong imprisonment. Shah Alam wisely kept his temper, but his son Muazuddin drew his sword<sup>2</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Orme, p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> *Khafi Khan*.

was with difficulty restrained by Shah Alam from killing his grandfather. 'Let us not,' said Shah Alam, 'set a pernicious example to posterity.' The emperor, with a magnanimous air, affected to overlook the young prince's conduct, but his acts presently showed that, as was his wont, he had nursed and brooded over the insult. To those present in the council he declared that his work in the Deccan was over, that his treaty with Golconda forbade its conquest and that he would at once return to Delhi. To give colour to this story, he sent offers of peace to Sambhaji, who gladly consented to a treaty that would leave him free to enjoy strong drink and the society of pretty women.

But the emperor's intention was still to reduce Abu Hussein to the same state as Sikandar Shah, and he concealed it merely to surprise the king. He began to march northwards as if to Delhi; on his way, so he wrote to Abu Hussein, he wished to do homage to the tomb of Sayad Mahomed Gisu, a famous saint of Gulbarga, and asked leave to visit it. Abu Hussein begged the emperor to do so, and sent him 5,00,000 gold mohurs to distribute in charity. The emperor accepted the money, worshipped at the saint's shrine until his army had occupied a number of strategic points, and then repaid Abu Hussein's gift by marching with all speed on his capital. His pretext was the balance of the tribute which Abu Hussein still owed. The unhappy king did his best to avert disaster by raising in his city a forced loan. The amount so collected still fell short of his debt to the imperial exchequer. He implored the emperor's envoy Sadat Khan to intercede for him and, stripping himself and his wives of their jewels, begged Sadat Khan to send them to Aurangzib. The envoy did so, and the emperor's debt having been paid in full, he was forced to invent a new pretext for his continued aggression. He wrote a long letter of reproach<sup>1</sup> to Abu Hussein in which he repeated his charge of alliance with infidels and added to it charges of drunkenness, debauchery and injustice. To none of Aurangzib's warnings had Abu Hussein paid heed. 'In the insolence of intoxication and worthlessness,' wrote the emperor, 'you have had no regard for the infamy of your deeds and you have displayed no hope of salvation either in this world or the next.' After reading this hypocritical missive, Abu Hussein's spirit rose to the same height as in the campaign of 1677, when he defeated the combined armies of Delhi and Bijapur. He withdrew into the fort of Golconda, and, fortifying it with all speed and care, sent fifty thousand men to delay as long as possible the emperor's advance. But Ibrahim Khan, whose treachery had in the last war proved fatal to his master, commanded the Moghul vanguard. A traitor himself, he succeeded in corrupting many of the Musulman officers in the army opposed to him. Nevertheless, Abdur Razzak, the Kutb Shahi commander-in-chief, delayed the investment until the end of January 1687, and then withdrew into the fortress to join the garrison. The emperor tried to take it by a sudden assault. But the leader of the storming party, Kulich Khan, Firoz

<sup>1</sup> Elliott and Dawson, Vol. VII. *Khafi Khan*, p. 325.



Jang's father and grandfather of Nizam 'ul Mulk, was killed by a cannon ball, and the assault failed. Both sides now prepared for a long siege and Firoz Jang was placed at the head of the besieging army.

The pride of Shah Alam had been deeply hurt by the emperor's disregard of the treaty and, while under the walls of Golconda, his feelings led him to enter into separate negotiations with Abu Hussein. The king plied the prince with presents in the hope of securing his intercession and invited him to a personal interview within the fortress. Shah Alam accepted the invitation, but before he could act on it, news of it reached the emperor's ears. Next morning when Shah Alam and his two eldest sons Muazuddin and Mahomed Azim, attended the daily darbar the emperor asked them in the kindest tones to go into an adjoining room to confer on matters of state with two of his generals. Not suspecting treachery, the princes complied and were at once arrested. The prisoners were treated with the utmost severity, and for six months were not allowed even to dress their hair. Gradually their imprisonment grew less harsh, but it was not until seven years had passed that Aurangzib released Shah Alam from confinement. Shah Alam's arrest in no way discouraged Sikandar Shah. The soul of his defence was the gallant Abdur Razzak. Aurangzib, accustomed easily to corrupt the chiefs of opposing armies, offered him almost regal honours if he would betray his master. But Abdur Razzak called to him the leading soldiers of the army, read out in their presence the emperor's letter, and by way of answer tore it to pieces on one of the bastions of Golconda. Sikandar Shah had accumulated vast stores of food and ammunition. The Golconda springs were abundant and perennial. Outside famine raged, for Sambhar, seeing that the emperor's peace was merely a device to gain time, sent Maratha horse to cut off the imperial supplies.

The emperor decided to fill in the moat as he had done at Bijapur, and after purifying himself, sewed the seams of the first cotton bag to be filled with earth and thrown into the moat. In spite of the fire from the walls, the Moghuls filled it in and tried to build on it a mound high enough to overlook the city. On the mound they intended to place heavy guns and looked forward to a speedy surrender. But increased fire from the walls hindered the erection of the mound. And the besiegers' losses and the prevailing famine depressed dangerously their spirit. The emperor recalled Azam Shah from northern India and Ruhulla Khan from Bijapur and bade them come at once with all available troops and supplies. They obeyed the command, but the reinforcements ate up the supplies which they brought. In May, therefore, Firoz Jang attempted a night surprise. He collected scaling ladders and ropes, and his attempt all but succeeded. A few men had reached the top when a pariah dog barked at them and gave the alarm. The garrison rushed to the spot, threw down the ladders, killed those who had mounted by them and drove off the rest of the storming party by musket fire from the walls. The next day Abu Hussein visited the spot and thanked the defenders. For the pariah dog he reserved special honours. He gave it a gold

collar, a gold chain and a gold coat. He created it a noble of Golconda and kept it thereafter as his constant companion<sup>1</sup>.

Next day the garrison counterattacked. At Abdur Razzak's orders a picked force sallied from the fortress, carried the mound, blew it up and destroyed both its garrison and the artillery to be mounted on it. With indomitable perseverance, Aurangzib had the mound rebuilt and fresh cannon made ready for it. But now another ally came to the aid of the besieged. In the middle of June the monsoon broke and three days' heavy rain washed down the half-finished work and flooded the trenches. Once again Abdur Razzak led out his men, and either killed or made captive every soldier inside them. Among the prisoners was Sarbarah Khan, one of Aurangzib's most trusted officers. Abu Hussein received kindly the veteran Moghul and, showing him his vast stores of food and ammunition, tried to convince him how hopeless was the siege. He then sent him back to the emperor with a letter in which he deplored the mutual slaughter of the faithful and offered to pay as tribute ten million rupees as well as a present of ten million rupees for each attempt that Aurangzib had made to storm the fortress. If the emperor preferred it he would provision the besieging army, so as to facilitate its retirement. Aurangzib angrily refused to cross the golden bridge. He sent back a message that he would never pardon Abu Hussein until he had seen him stand in front of him with clasped hands. Exasperated at his failure to raise batteries to command the fortress, Aurangzib decided to undermine its walls. To the skill of the engineers the emperor added his own cunning. He drew up his army as if to assault a spot where three mines had been dug under the walls. By this device he wished to draw there a large number of the garrison and blow them up together with the fortifications. But Abdur Razzak's skill was superior to that of the imperial engineers. Countermining, he discovered the mines and wetted the gunpowder on the side of the fortress. The result was that when the mines were fired only one ignited. It blew outwards and harmless to the garrison, killed a number of the besiegers. The garrison instantly sallied out and in the confusion inflicted heavy loss on their enemies. The besiegers had no sooner driven back the sallying party than the second mine exploded unexpectedly, and proved also far more fatal to the Moghuls than to the fortress.

The emperor resolved once again to build the mound and raise on it heavy batteries. But ill fortune attended his every enterprise. On the completion of the mound and the erection of the batteries, he ordered a general assault. But a violent storm broke and in a few minutes turned the countryside into a sea of mud. In the water-logged ground the Moghul battalions could neither advance nor retire and fell in heaps under the fire of the fortress. At last Abdur Razzak, sallying out, cut them to pieces, spiked their guns and blew up their earthworks. He removed at leisure the beams and bags of earth used in building the mound and employed them successfully to repair such

<sup>1</sup> *Khafiz Khan.*

damage as the explosion of the mines had caused to the walls. Among the wounded was Firoz Jang, the commander of the besieging army.

Disgusted at his repeated failure the emperor again had recourse to treachery. He made further overtures to Abdur Razzak, but received the reply that Abdur Razzak would fight to the death, like the gallant men who died round the prophet's grandson at Karbela. An Afghan named Abdulla Khan received Aurangzib's proposals more favourably. On the 27th September 1687,<sup>1</sup> Abdulla Khan opened the gate over which he held command. The Moghuls passed through and overpowered the surprised garrison. But the lofty soul of Abdur Razzak refused to accept defeat. With only a dozen followers he threw himself on the Moghul army. His followers were soon cut down. But Abdur Razzak's swordsmanship was as unrivalled as his courage. Leaving behind him a lane of dead and dying, he cut his way through a thousand enemies, and with the blood streaming from seventy wounds he strove to reach the upper citadel, wherein he hoped to organize a fresh defence. But the dauntless spirit that had triumphed over ill fortune, pain, nay even death itself, could no longer sustain the body's failing strength. He swayed in his saddle, then reeled and fell under a coconut tree in the garden of the citadel. Two days later he was found and carried to the house of Ruhulla Khan, who chivalrously cared for the fallen leader. In course of time Abdur Razzak recovered and, although at first he refused, eventually accepted high office in the imperial army.

Abu Hussein met calamity with the same spirit with which he had borne the siege. On hearing of Abdulla Khan's treachery, he went to his zenana and there took leave of his wives and asked their pardon for any offences that he might inadvertently have committed. Then going to the great room where he had for many years held royal state, he seated himself on his throne and with unmoved face awaited the coming of the Moghul leaders. As they delayed, he sent for and ate his evening meal. When Ruhulla Khan, the first Moghul captain to enter the palace, arrived, he greeted him with exquisite urbanity. When Azim Shah came he threw round his neck the rich pearl necklace that he himself was wearing. Escorted to Aurangzib's presence, so high was his bearing that he extorted from the conqueror civility, if not humanity. Like Sikandar Shah, Abu Hussein passed from a throne to a dungeon in Daulatabad. His treasures were valued at nearly seven millions sterling in coin alone. His jewels probably amounted to another million.<sup>2</sup> Of this sum one lakh only was diverted from the imperial treasury. Before Abu Hussein was sent to Daulatabad, he spent an evening listening to the imperial band. So pleased was he at the skill of the bandsmen that he said with a sigh that had he still been a king, he would have divided among them a hundred thousand rupees. The words were repeated to Aurangzib and he at once ordered the sum in question to be paid to the fortunate musicians.\*

The siege of Golconda, lasting as it did for eight months, caused to the imperialists vast losses both in men and material. Nor was there

<sup>1</sup> Orme, p. 14.

\* *Khafi Khan.*

\* *Chitnis Bakhar.*

any real corresponding gain. The cost of the siege far exceeded the treasures found in the fort. The rich country round Golconda had been so plundered that it was no longer cultivated and it paid to Delhi very little of what it had formerly paid to the Kutb Shahi kings. It is true that the prestige acquired by the conquest both of Bijapur and Golconda was immense, and the state maintained at this time by Aurangzib was almost incredible. Vast stables full of horses accompanied the emperor on every march. Elephants carried the innumerable ladies of his seraglio. Hundreds of cages containing every kind of bird and animal from ostriches and hawks to tigers and hunting cheetahs followed him to every camp. The canvas walls outside the royal tents were 1,200 yards in circumference. Inside hung in profusion Persian carpets and tapestries, Chinese silks, Indian muslins and cloth of gold, European satins, velvets and broadcloth. The privacy of his zenana was as complete as in the Delhi fort, while the ceremonial observed in the camp was the same as that of the Diwan-i-Aam and the Diwan-i-Khas. In the midst of this pomp and splendour moved the grim and austere figure of the emperor. His personal expenditure cost the state not a single farthing. An old Islamic legend exists that once King David was vouchsafed a vision of an angel of the Lord and humbly expressed the hope that his government of Israel was pleasing in the eyes of his divine Master. The angel answered that it was, save in one particular. The king implored forgiveness for his single deficiency and begged to be informed of it. 'King David,' said the angel, 'the Lord is not pleased with you because instead of earning money for your own use, you defray your expenses from the State treasury.' The king repented of his error and corrected it. From that time onwards he paid for his food by working in his leisure moments as a blacksmith. Bearing in mind the angelic rebuke, Aurangzib met his personal expenses by embroidering caps in his leisure moments. These he sold at a moderate price to the nobles of his court and spent the sum realized on the purchase of his food. The balance, if any, he distributed in charity.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE GREAT MOGHUL OFFENSIVE

#### THE CAPTURE OF SAMBHAJI

A.D. 1687 TO 1689

THE closing years of Sambhaji's life have long perplexed historians. For some months he would neglect his duties, suffer his armies to disperse, and his horses and elephants to die for want of food, while he shut himself up in some fort or palace. Then he would once more

<sup>1</sup> Musulman blacksmiths still call themselves sometimes 'Daudkhanis, or followers of King David.

appear at the head of his army and defeat the Moghul forces wherever he met them. The key to the riddle is this. Two opposing factions were ceaselessly struggling to obtain an influence over the king's mind. On the one side was Kalasha with his band of panders and harlots, trying to reduce the king to the imbecile inertness which suited their purpose. On the other side were Shivaji's old comrades who were striving to rouse the noble and manly feelings not yet extinguished in Sambhaji's heart. Sometimes one faction, sometimes the other faction gained the victory, and the varying fortunes of the struggle were due to the changing conduct of the king.

Early in Sambhaji's reign a remarkable incident occurred. In 1681 Raghunathpant Hanmante, the governor of Jinji and of Shivaji's southern conquests, arrived in state to pay his respects to the new king.<sup>1</sup> With him came five thousand cavalry and ten thousand infantry and a train of carts and elephants that carried between thirty and forty lakhs in gold coins, the surplus income of his province. Sambhaji received him in a specially prepared camp on the banks of the Birwadi river and graciously accepted an invitation to a banquet. In return the king held a reception in Raghunathpant's honour and invited to it the viceroy's brother, Janardanpant, the unlucky commander of the force that had invested Panhala. Among the other guests were Nilo Pingle, the Peshwa's son, Hambirrao Mohite the cavalry commander-in-chief, Netaji Palkar and Umaji Pant. After the king had thanked Raghunathpant for his care of the distant province, the latter rose to reply. But instead of the usual ceremonial words, Hanmante recited a formidable list of grievances against the new administration.

'Why,' asked the daring viceroy, 'is the kingdom shrinking daily? Why is the Sidi still unsubdued? Why are the peasants discontented? Why are Brahmans beheaded and not imprisoned? Why are not Sambhaji's enemies won over rather than executed? Why is the administration not in the king's hands instead of those of Kalasha?' Sambhaji bore the viceroy's rebuke with outward calmness and merely protested that the labour and cost of the administration had grown since his father's death. But he deeply resented what he deemed Hanmante's breach of etiquette, and Kalasha did not fail to fan his resentment. Hanmante saw that it was no longer safe for him to remain at court. In a private interview he warned the king against the coming Moghul invasion and begged him to meet it by an offensive and defensive alliance with Bijapur and Golconda. But his advice was treated with contempt, and a few days later he asked for and obtained leave to return to Jinji. On the way he fell ill and died. Nevertheless, the courage and sincerity of the viceroy were not lost on the king and the Maratha nobles added to the strictures of Hanmante their own respectful counsel. To their

<sup>1</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar*. Grant Duff (Vol. I, p. 263) writes that after the darbar the king released Moro Pingle and Janardanpant. But Moro Pingle had been released at the coronation. Since Janardanpant was, according to the *Chitnis Bakhar* present at the banquet, he had probably been released at the same time. According to Mr. Sardesai (*Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 580) Moro Pingle died in this year.

advice were no doubt due the vigour and activity of Sambhaji's early years.

But Sambhaji had to fight an enemy from which his father had been free, namely, the treason of his own officers. I have already mentioned the great plot of the Shirkes. But the intrigues of Aurangzib and the intense dislike felt by the Marathas for Kalasha were the cause of many fresh conspiracies. Salher and even Ramsej, gallantly defended though it had been against Firoz Jang and Khan Jehan, fell in the end by treachery. In November 1684,<sup>1</sup> two thousand of Sambhaji's cavalry tried to desert to the Moghuls. They obtained leave to bathe in the Godavari, the holy river that runs past Nasik. They intended to loiter there until they could conveniently join the Moghul army. But Sambhaji received information of their design and, turning back, massacred them to a man. Such treachery, instead of furthering the Maratha cause, only led the king to rely more and more on the smooth-tongued Kalasha. But the obvious peril which threatened the state on the fall of Bijapur and the siege of Golconda roused the king and enabled for the time Hambirrao Mohite to overcome the evil influence of the alien minister. In the preceding chapter I have mentioned the attacks of the Maratha horse on the army investing Golconda. But they were never pressed home, for the true Maratha policy was to prolong and not raise the siege. By lengthening the arduous campaign the Marathas would gain for themselves freedom to overrun the southern provinces of Bijapur, and thereby increase in size and in resources the sanctuary which Shivaji's genius had made ready for his people.

In 1687 Harji Mahadik was viceroy of the Maratha possessions in the south and south east. To Harji Mahadik Shivaji had given in marriage Ambikabai, his daughter by his first wife Saibai, and Sambhaji's full sister. After the great southern campaign Harji Mahadik was made governor of the fort of Jinji. On Raghunathpant Hanmante's death Sambhaji raised Harji Mahadik to the post of viceroy of the south. Vyankoji, Shivaji's half brother and raja of Tanjore had on Shivaji's death repudiated the suzerainty of the Maratha king and as Sikandar Shah's vassal had sent forces to aid him during the siege of Bijapur. Not only that, but he and his son Shahaji had added several of Shivaji's conquests to the state of Tanjore. To safeguard his possessions in southern India and above all the great fort of Jinji, Sambhaji in June 1687 sent to reinforce Harji Mahadik a body of twelve thousand horse under the command of Keshav Pingle, Moro Pingle's brother, and a Marathi officer named Santaji Ghorpade. The latter was a distant connexion of the Ghorpade whose treachery to Shahaji was so terribly avenged by Shahaji's son. Mudhol was the fief of that branch of the Ghorpades. Another branch had established itself at Kapshi and Mhaloji Ghorpade of Kapshi was the contemporary and friend of Shivaji, whom he outlived for nine years. He died in Sambhaji's defence as captain of his guards. Mhaloji left three sons, Santaji, Bahirji

<sup>1</sup> Orme, p. 180.

and Maloji, and all three served in the armies of the great king. Santaji and Bahiri won distinction by taking Kolar, Gajendragad and other strong places in the Carnatic. As their reward they received Gajendragad in fief. Kalasha had insinuated to Sambhaji that Harji Mahadik wished to make himself independent. Sambhaji, therefore, advised Keshav Pingle and Santaji Ghorpade to arrest Harji Mahadik and seize and hold Jinji in the king's name. Harji Mahadik harboured no disloyal feelings towards one who was at once his brother-in-law and master. But his agents at court had warned him of the royal intention and he naturally regarded with dislike the commanders sent to reinforce him. Instead of co-operating with them cordially, he spent several weeks in strengthening his hold over Jinji fortress. The emperor who had learnt alike of the despatch of the troops and of the dissensions between the Maratha leaders, sent a force to attack Bangalore, still in Maratha hands. The straits to which Bangalore was soon reduced led Harji Mahadik and Keshav Pingle to forget their jealousies and march to its relief. But in August 1687 it fell, before the relieving army reached it. Harji Mahadik retired to Jinji and sent Keshav Pingle and Santaji Ghorpade with eighteen thousand horse to invade Mysore.

After the battle of Talikota in 1564 and the subsequent break-up of the Vijayanagar kingdom the viceroy of Mysore had made himself an independent ruler and had recently grown greatly in power. Harji Mahadik's design was to reduce Mysore to a Maratha possession while the Moghuls were still engaged in the siege of Golconda. But before he could achieve anything the military situation entirely changed. The fall of the beleaguered fortress had freed the Moghul army to conquer southern India. Nor was the emperor slow to profit by his success. Six thousand Moghul horse under Asad Khan seized the country from Masulipatam to the Palar river. The Golconda viceroy at Cuddapah on the north Pennar river at once accepted service under the conqueror. Nor were the Hindu governors of Conjeeveram and Poonamallee less ready to secure their posts by changing sides. The latter, indeed, justified his conduct by a picturesque illustration. 'The world', he said, 'is constantly turning on its axis and altering the side which it presents to the sun. It is, therefore, not strange that an inhabitant of the world should follow so excellent an example.' The Moghul successes produced among the Maratha leaders quarrels and despondency. Harji Mahadik recalled Keshav Pingle and ordered him to invade the countries on the eastern coast between the north Pennar and the Palar rivers and to drive out the Moghul garrisons and partisans. Keshav Pingle refused to obey Harji Mahadik's orders. So Mahadik with great daring sent instead a part of the Jinji garrison. The governor of Poonamallee, true to his principle, once more revolved on his axis and owned Sambhaji as his suzerain. The rest of the province followed suit and the small Maratha force without difficulty collected the revenues of Poonamallee, Arcot and Conjeeveram.

At the same time Sambhaji had not been idle. After the fall of Bijapur he had obtained a great accession of valuable troops. Aurangzib received coldly the Maratha leaders in the Bijapur service.



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On the other hand, the Daphles, the Manes, the Ghatges, the Nimbalkars, who had loyally stood by the falling dynasty, had no wish to serve under the treacherous and bigoted emperor. They therefore brought to the Maratha king their skill and experience and their considerable feudal contingents. His army thus reinforced, Sambhaji swept through the Bijapur provinces south of Panhala, and before the end of 1687 had reduced a hundred and twenty strong places and important towns. Nor did Keshav Pingle long remain mutinous. Ashamed at Harji Mahadik's easy success and fearing the just reprimand of his indignant master, he took Santaji with him into the conquered seaboard. They occupied it with their troops and enabled Harji Mahadik to recall his garrison to Jinji.

Thus at the end of 1687 Aurangzib realized that his gigantic efforts to subdue Bijapur and Golconda had added to Sambhaji's possessions provinces as large as he had added to his own. Losing for once his self-control, the emperor vowed in a passion that he would not return to Delhi until he had seen Sambhaji's bleeding head weltering at his feet.<sup>1</sup> Nor was he long content with mere threats of vengeance. In February 1688 twelve thousand Moghul horse and a large number of local levies under Mahomed Sidik entered the Carnatic seaboard to drive out the Marathas. On their approach the Marathas retired from Conjeeveram to a line of forts on both sides of the Palar river and the Moghuls occupied Poonamallee and Wandiwash. The Moghul commander deemed it useless to besiege the Maratha strongholds. On the other hand, the Maratha commanders feared a pitched battle with the victorious Moghul cavalry. So both armies avoided each other and contented themselves with ravaging the countryside and robbing and torturing the unfortunate peasantry. While Aurangzib thus neutralized the Maratha successes in the south-east, he did not overlook the advantages of carrying war into the enemy's country. In December 1687 he sent Sarja Khan, a Bijapur officer, who had joined the Moghuls, to recover the western provinces of Bijapur. At first successful, Sarja Khan recovered the open country and penetrated the Kistna valley as far as Wai. There his army met the fate that had befallen Azul Khan's. Hambirrao Mohite, sent by Sambhaji to oppose Sarja Khan, drew him into the dense forests round Mahableshwar and after a fierce struggle gained a decisive victory. But severe as the disaster was to the Moghuls, the victorious Marathas suffered an even greater loss. Among those slain in the battle of Wai was the gallant Hambirrao Mohite. The warworn cavalry leader added to skilful generalship an intimate knowledge of the Deccan and Konkan hills. On the battle-field the sound of the veteran's voice was worth fifty squadrons. In the council chamber he alone ventured to beard the infamous Kalasha or recall to his master a fitting sense of his exalted duties. Had Hambirrao lived, it is probable that with his hold firmly established on Jinji and with the resources of much of southern India at his command, Sambhaji would have repelled the Moghul offensive. But on Hambirrao Mohite's death Kalasha became

<sup>1</sup> Orme, p. 201.

all powerful and Sambhaji became more and more a slave to profligacy and intemperance; and the effects of the king's vice and sloth were soon visible in the disasters of his armies.

The Moghul troops recovered the Bijapur and Golconda provinces recently occupied by the Marathas, including Poonamallee, of which the volatile governor, completing his revolutions, adhered finally to the Moghul cause. At the same time Aurangzib's armies issuing from their headquarters at Bijapur swept through the Maratha Deccan and reduced Shivaji's line of fortresses between Tathavda and Panhala. It is interesting to note that in this campaign an outburst of bubonic plague caused severe loss to the imperial army.<sup>1</sup> It had been imported from Ahmadabad and Surat, but it disappeared when the emperor moved his camp from Bijapur to Akluj in the Sholapur district. Aurangzib resolved to take one after the other the Maratha strongholds above the Sahyadris. Nevertheless so long as Sambhaji remained at Raygad the emperor's successes could not be decisive. That was the heart of the Maratha kingdom. Therein lay Shivaji's treasures, his trophies and his relics. It was there that the Maratha leaders gathered to worship the departed hero. So long as the Maratha sovereign dwelt at Raygad the Maratha spirit would live and the embers of Maratha independence burn unextinguished. Raygad, if properly defended, was impregnable. The giant crag rising out of the Konkan to a height of nearly four thousand feet defied alike the Moghul engineers and the imperial artillery. But in the rainy season the climate of Raygad is unpleasant. The monsoon bursts over it with exceptional violence and from June to September its summit is veiled in fog and mist. To Kalasha born and bred in the Gangetic valley, its climate was peculiarly repellent. He therefore induced Sambhaji in the summer of 1688 to exchange the shelter of Raygad for the comforts of Sangameshwar,<sup>2</sup> a small township twenty miles north of Vishalgad and twenty-two miles north-east of Ratnagiri. It is built at the *sangam* or junction of the Alaknanda and Varuna rivers and as the name implies, is sacred to the god Shiva. There Kalasha had built himself a palace surrounded by beautiful gardens, and for the summer months he placed it at the king's disposal. The family mansion of the Sardesai<sup>3</sup> was offered him for the rainy season. Trusting to the forests that lay between Sangameshwar and the Moghul forces, Sambhaji passed the monsoon of 1688 in an orgy of every kind of intemperance. Nor would any evil result have ensued, had he amended his ways when the rains died down. But the minister, unwilling to return to Raygad, artfully detained his master by the constant addition of new beauties to his zenana. At last he induced Sambhaji to seize the comely bride of a Maratha noble on the way to join her husband.<sup>4</sup> Thereafter it is probable that he persuaded his master to linger on at Sangameshwar until the storm raised by his

<sup>1</sup> *Khafi Khan*.

<sup>2</sup> Place names ending in 'eshwar' imply that the spot is sacred to the god Shiva.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix.

Orme, p. 107.

act had abated. However this may be, the ill-fated king instead of returning in September to his impregnable stronghold lingered at Sangameshwar until the last days of December 1688. This proved his ruin.

Among the nobles who, during the siege of Golconda deserted Abu Hussen was Shaikh Nizam Hyderabad<sup>1</sup>. As a soldier he had a high reputation and as the reward of his treachery, he received command of five thousand horse. His son Iklas Khan was made commander of four thousand. In the cold weather of 1688, father and son were sent by Aurangzib to besiege Panhala. Another force under Firoz Jang was sent to take the fortresses round Raygad and, isolating that fortress, to reduce it by famine. But Shaikh Nizam, an enterprising soldier and, hearing reports of Sambhaji's inactivity at Sangameshwar, he conceived the daring plan of seizing the king at his own chosen hiding-place. He first secured hillmen who knew paths through the wild forests that surround it. Then starting Kolhapur with his son Iklas Khan, his nephews and two or three thousand horsemen, he rode at full speed for Sangameshwar. As the paths were too steep for the horses, their riders alighted, but rested only so long as was needed to save their animals from exhaustion. Behind the raiding party followed, at a more leisurely pace, two thousand horse and a thousand trained infantry. They were Shaikh Nizam's supports in case the scheme failed. It was impossible that so large a force should entirely escape notice, and on the morning of December 28, scouts brought to the king word that a body of Moghul horse was approaching at full gallop. But Sambhaji, sleeping off the previous night's debauch and referred him to Kaka 'Kalasha is a magician,' said the drunken king, 'and he will by magic destroy our enemies.' The scouts tried in vain to make the king realize his danger, but Sambhaji losing all patience drove from his room, threatening to cut off their noses if they told him more wild tales of Moghul horsemen. The scouts went to the office of the king's guard. They saw Shaikh Nizam only a mile or so off and implored the king to dress, promising him that they would clear the way for him to the shelter of Raygad. But nothing could rouse Sambhaji from his drunken stupor. Little time was now left; for the Moghul squadrons were circling round the village or galloping at breakneck pace through the streets to the palace. Some Maratha officers, despairing of their king, took flight and succeeded in reaching Raygad. Others, faithful unto death, remained by their master. When Shaikh Nizam saw fugitives leaving Sangameshwar, he sent Iklas Khan and his fastest troops with a letter in which he offered to enter into negotiations with the king. By this ruse Shaikh Nizam hoped to detain Sambhaji until he could arrive with the main body. But no ruse was needed. The king slumbered on, heedless alike

<sup>1</sup> *Khatir Khan* and Scott's *Deccan*. His other name was *Makanab Khan* Tukurrib Khan as given by Grant Duff.

<sup>2</sup> Among those who died fighting for Sambhaji was *Mhaloji Ghorpade* captain of his guards and father of *Santaji Ghorpade*.

war or peace. Iklas Khan presented his letter to the sentries; but learning that the king was still inside the palace, he forced his way in. Such guards as resisted were at once cut down. Kalasha showed unsuspected courage. He fought until an arrow pierced his right arm, when he fell to the ground. Sambhaji whom his attendants had forced to mount his horse, immediately dismounted and carried Kalasha to a little temple of Shiva attached to the palace. There the king, as his father had done at Mathura, tried to escape in the guise of a Shivaite ascetic. The priests had the king's hair and beard rapidly shaved and smeared him with ashes. There was, however, no time for the king to conceal his ornaments, and when Iklas Khan saw on this strange ascetic a pearl necklace, he at once seized his person. On Shaikh Nizam's arrival Sambhaji admitted his identity. He was put in chains and when the supports arrived he was seated on an elephant alongside of Shaikh Nizam. Other elephants carried Kalasha and the remaining prisoners taken by the raiders, and the victorious procession started for the emperor's camp (December 28, 1688).

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE GREAT MOGHUL OFFENSIVE

#### DEATH OF SAMBHAJI AND REGENCY OF RAJARAM

A D 1689

As soon as he found leisure, Shaikh Nizam sent a formal despatch to Aurangzib, informing him of his brilliant feat of arms. But the news had already been conveyed by news-writers to the imperial camp. Everywhere there was immense rejoicing. The regular troops looked forward to a speedy peace and a triumphant return to the capital. The Rajput contingents hoped that they would soon see again the wild plains of Jodhpur or those gloomy fastnesses in the Aravallis from which chief after chief of Udaipur had defied successfully the Moghul arms. The nobles of Bijapur and Golconda, now officers in the imperial service looked forward to the enjoyment of the fiefs acquired by their recent treachery. The wretched peasantry hoped that after years of warfare they would for a time, at any rate, get a breathing space in which to repair the havoc caused by the contending armies. During the five days that it took Shaikh Nizam to go from Sangameswar to Akluj<sup>1</sup> the countryside hardly slept at all, so busy were they celebrating the success and getting ready a welcome for the hero who had achieved it. Nor was the emperor niggardly in the bestowal of honours. He sent to a point four miles from Akluj a large

<sup>1</sup> *Khafī Khan*. Akluj is on the north of the river Nira. Grant Duff writes that the emperor had by this time moved to Tulapur. Scott's *Deccan* gives Bahadurgad. The Maratha chroniclers do not give the place where the emperor first saw Sambhaji. They mention Tulapur as the place of execution. I think that *Khafī Khan* is right and that Akluj was the spot to which Sambhaji was first taken. The emperor shortly afterwards moved to Tulapur.

body of troops to escort in triumph the general and his prisoners. As the procession neared the camp, it passed through densely crowded lanes and streets, while a vast multitude of both sexes gazed from the roofs on the spectacle of successful daring and fallen majesty.

The events of the last few days had sobered the king; and free from the fumes of wine and the evil influence of Kalasha, he recovered the courage with which Nature had abundantly endowed him. With undaunted brow he returned the gaze of the spectators and met their gibes and jeers with scornful indifference. Once or twice he begged the Rajput soldiers whom he passed to kill him and so spare him further humiliation. But though they pitied deeply Sambhaji's condition, they yet feared more deeply still the wrath of the inexorable emperor. Aurangzib had summoned a darbar and into the assembly room filled with the captains of Deccan and the nobles of Rajasthan, Sambhaji and Kalasha were brought. As they entered, Aurangzib descended from his throne and humbly bowed his head, to show his gratitude to the Almighty. Kalasha profited by the occasion to display a wit and courage that half redeemed his honour. His hands were so tightly bound that he could not stir them. His head was so fastened that he could not move it. Nevertheless he succeeded in catching his master's eye and quoted to him a Hindi couplet of which the meaning was as follows —

‘O Raja, at the sight of thee King Alamgir (the official title of Aurangzib) cannot keep his seat, but has perforce descended from it to do thee honour.’

The emperor had not as yet determined the fate of his captives. He ordered their removal to prison and turned to the more pleasing task of rewarding their captors. He gave Shaikh Nizam the titles of Khan Jaman (the chief of the time) and Fateh Jang (the victorious in battle). He bestowed on him an immediate grant of Rs 50,000 and a horse and an elephant from the imperial stables, and he raised his command from one of five thousand to one of six thousand horse. Iklas Khan was promoted from a command of four thousand to one of five thousand, and all Shaikh Nizam's nephews who had taken part in the expedition received rewards. For some weeks after the darbar the emperor discussed the situation with his leading advisers. They pressed Aurangzib to spare Sambhaji's life, on condition that he ordered his officers to surrender the fortresses still held by the Marathas. At first Aurangzib seems to have inclined to this merciful course, foreign though it was to his nature. But Sambhaji steadily refused to accept these shameful terms. With a courage unsurpassed by his father, he told the imperial messengers that he did not trust the emperor's word and that even were it kept, he for his part preferred death to lifelong captivity. At last, weary of their importunity, he broke out into passionate abuse both of the emperor and of the prophet whom he revered. When his speech was reported to Aurangzib, the emperor gladly made it an excuse to reject the humane suggestions of his nobles. He moved his camp to Tulapur, a town sixteen miles north-east of Poona, built near the spot where the Indrayani river flows into the Bhima. It was at one time known

as Nangargaon, but was changed by Shahaji, Shivaji's father, to Tulapur, or 'the place of weighing'. One day, so the story runs, Shahaji wished to weigh an elephant belonging to his friend, Murar Jagdev, the minister of Bijapur.<sup>1</sup> The latter had made a vow to distribute in charity the weight in silver of his riding elephant. In vain the learned men of the Adil Shahi court racked their brains to devise a pair of scales strong enough to bear the animal. Shahaji's ingenious mind solved the problem. He put the elephant in a flat bottomed boat on the Indrayani river. Marking the waterline on the boat he had the beast removed and the boat filled with stones until it again sank to the former waterline. Lastly removing the stones he weighed them and thus correctly, if laboriously, ascertained the weight of Murar Jagdev's elephant.

The emperor resolved to make Tulapur memorable to the Maratha people by a spectacle far more terrible than the weighing of an elephant. He had Sambhaji and his favourite Kalasha dressed in the garb of wandering anchorites. In their hands they carried rattles and on their heads were caps sewn with bells. They were then tied or camels with their faces to the tail. In this guise they were led in triumph through the market-place of Tulapur. After he had feasted his eyes on the degradation of his enemy, the emperor sent Sambhaji a message that even yet he would spare his life if he accepted Islam. Sambhaji, fearless to the last, met insult with insult. He replied scornfully that if the emperor gave him in marriage his daughter, he would turn Musulman, but not otherwise. To this reply he added several words in praise of the god Shiva and in foul scorn of Mahomed. On learning Sambhaji's answer, Aurangzib determined to give full rein to his vindictive temper. He had Sambhaji brought beneath his throne and there ordered his tongue to be cut out as a punishment for his blasphemy. His eyes were gouged out of their sockets by the court surgeon. His heart was torn out, his limbs separated from his body and all save his head thrown as food to the village dogs of Tulapur.<sup>2</sup> After Sambhaji, Kalasha and the other prisoners were tortured to death. Finally the heads of the king and his minister were stuffed with straw and paraded by beat of drum in all the chief cities of the Deccan (March 11, 1689).<sup>3</sup>

So died at the age of thirty-two the eldest son of Shivaji. The misfortunes of his reign are chiefly to be traced to his own treason to his father. But for that the great king would never have been estranged from him. Nor would Soyarabai and her Shirke kinsmen have dared to plot his supersession by Rajaram. Their sedition led him to trust Kalasha rather than his own subjects and in the end enslaved him to a lewd and scheming priest. Maratha chroniclers have painted Sambhaji as a monster of iniquity. But the king was not that; and in other circumstances his career might have been very different. Although he spent most of his life campaigning, he was by no means averse from

<sup>1</sup> Wilkes, *Mysore*, Vol. I., p. 156

<sup>2</sup> Orme; *Shedgavkar Bakhar*; *Khafi Khan*.

<sup>3</sup> Burgess gives the date as March 14, 1689.

study. He employed a learned man called Keshav Pandit Adhyaksh, a friend of the great king, to read with him Valmiki's celebrated epic the *Ramayana*. As a reward, he gave Keshav in 1684 sixteen hundred small silver coins known as *ladis*. The king was moreover no mean versifier. He is known to have written two books of Hindi poetry. The first was called *Nakhshukh*, in which he described the pleasures of love. The second was named *Nayakabhad*. In it he sang the varying charms of the beauties who beguiled his leisure moments. His excesses, both in wine and women, never blinded him wholly to the claims of religion. In a letter, written in 1688, which is still extant, he rebuked severely a subedar, for trying to extort money from the temple of Morya Gosavi at Chinchwad. 'What need have you,' wrote the angry king to his subordinate, 'to raise trouble in the village of Chinchwad? How can the king suffer such conduct? If you continue in your evil courses, there will be no forgiveness for you. He who raises trouble like this will die at the king's hands.'

In caste matters Sambhaji had the liberal views of the soldier. A certain Brahman, by name Gangadhar Rangnath, *kulkarni* of Harsul, was in the service of the Moghuls. Incurring their displeasure, he was forcibly converted to Islam and compelled to eat and drink with his new co-religionists. After his conversion he was again restored to favour and raised to high office. In course of time he amassed a fortune, but as he grew old he wished to re-enter the faith of his ancestors. He abandoned his wealth to his oppressors and making his way to Raygad, he begged Sambhaji to help him. To the strictly orthodox Gangadhar Rangnath had sinned beyond hope of pardon. But Sambhaji by using his influence induced the priesthood to prescribe a penance by which he might once more become a Brahman. The penance prescribed was no light one. The unhappy pervers was ordered to walk three hundred and sixty times round a holy mountain and make two pilgrimages to distant shrines. Gangadhar Rangnath, however, performed the penance. The king thereafter obtained the signatures of a number of leading Brahmans to a document that pronounced the sinner to be pure and declared that any who doubted his purity was himself guilty of an offence, not only against the Brahmans, but against the gods themselves.<sup>1</sup>

That Sambhaji committed grave faults cannot be denied, yet great as they were, his punishment was greater still, and when the Maratha leaders heard of his cruel execution, of his dauntless bearing in the face of torture, of the courage with which he had silently borne hideous torments, all resentment against the king left their breasts. They remembered only the gallant youth who had seized Janardanpant at Panhala, had defeated Alvor at Phonda and had hunted from the Konkani the shattered army of Shah Alam.

To decide what steps should now be taken, the Maratha leaders assembled at Raygad. Sambhaji had left a widow Yesubai and a son Shivaji. Yesubai like Soyarabai was a daughter of the patrician house of Shirke. Her maiden name had been Jiubai, which she changed

<sup>1</sup> Rajvade, *Itihasachi Sadhane*, Vol. V

according to Hindu custom on her marriage. Her father was Pilaji Shirke. She was married to Sambhaji in December 1667, shortly after the prince's return from Delhi. Her son Shivaji had been born in December 1680, (*Margshursh Sud* 10, 1602), shortly after Sambhaji's accession; and in honour of his birth Sambhaji had given large sums in charity and had completed the dam of a lake left unfinished by his father. Yesubai with Prince Shivaji at her side presided at the council and round her sat a group of men, whose names were in the next few years to become immortal. Santaji Ghorpade's origin has already been related. Next to him sat Dhanaji Jadav, a cousin of the prince. In 1629, as it will be remembered, Lakhaji Jadav, the father of Jijabai, was assassinated at Daulatabad at the order of Murtaza Nizam Shah the second. With him perished his son, Achaloji. Achaloji left an infant son named Santaji whom Jijabai adopted as her own. He grew up as a companion of Sambhaji, Shivaji's eldest brother, and fell with him before the walls of Kanakgiri. Santaji left a son called Shambhusing whom Shivaji brought up. Shambhusing's only son was the renowned Dhanaji Jadav. He was already distinguished by his courage and soldierly talents and had won the praise and esteem of Prataprao Guzar. Beyond Dhanaji sat Khanderao Dabhade. He was the son of Yeshpatil Dabhade,<sup>1</sup> a small landowner of Talegaon Dabhade, a village on the road between Poona and Bombay. Yeshpatil had for some years been the personal attendant of Shivaji and afterwards of Rajaram. Yeshpatil's two sons, Khanderao and Shivaji, first entered the service of the royal family, then they received commands in the army. Shivaji afterwards lost his life in saving Rajaram's. Khanderao Dabhade lived to conquer Gujarat.

Beyond the martial faces of the Maratha captains could be seen the thoughtful brows of the Brahman and Prabhu statesmen. Hanmante was there, now fully restored to the royal favour. Beyond him sat Pralhad Niraji, the son of Niraji Ravaji, Shivaji's *Saranyayadhish* or Chief Justice. Beyond him again were Khando Ballal Chitnis and Ramchandra Nilkanth Bavdekar. Khando Ballal was the younger son of Balaji Avaji Chitnis, the great king's private secretary. His father and his elder brother had at Sambhaji's orders been trampled to death under the feet of an elephant. Khando and his brother Nilo were then children. Their lives were spared, but they were confined and their property confiscated. They found a friend in Sambhaji's queen Yesubai. She pitied the orphans' fallen state. Her prayers induced Sambhaji to release them, but Kalasha's malice prevented the return of their property. The kindly queen supported the children from her own private purse. Her generosity effaced from Khando Ballal's mind the memory of the king's injustice and his life was spent in the royal service. During the siege of Goa he saved Sambhaji from drowning, and in return received his father's office of *chitnis* or private secretary. Nilo who feared Sambhaji's vindictive temper left, as soon as he could, the court for Junji and took service with Harji Raje Mahadik, a fast friend of Balaji Avaji.

<sup>1</sup> *Dabhade Bakhari*.



Ramchandra Nilkanth Bavdekar was the *Pant Amatya* or Finance Minister. He came of a family, who for four generations had served the house of Bhosle. His great-grandfather Naropant had served Maloji. His grandfather Sono or Sondev Narayan had been left with Jijabai at Shivner by Shahaji, when he himself went south in the service of the king of Bijapur. Sondev Narayan's two sons Nilkanth and Abaji had been the lifelong companions of Shivaji. In 1644 Nilkanth had distinguished himself in the capture of Tala and Gossala and in 1647 Shivaji had made him his *muzumdar*, or the head of his finances. To the younger brother, Abaji, Shivaji had entrusted the expedition that achieved the capture of Kalyan from Mulana Ahmad. Nilkanth died in 1672 and on his death Shivaji promoted his eldest son Naropant to be *muzumdar* in his father's place. But the young man's mind turned rather to the future than the present. Much as the great king respected him, he could not keep an anchorite as his finance minister. At his coronation the king transferred the charge from Naropant to his younger brother Ramchandra. He altered his title from *muzumdar* to its Sanskrit equivalent *amatya*. That office Ramchandra had held with distinction through Sambhaji's troubled reign to the present time.

Deeply incensed at the cruelties inflicted on the dead king, none present thought of making peace with the Moghuls. The first question discussed was which member of the Bhosle house was best fitted to succeed Sambhaji and avenge his death. Should Prince Shivaji be crowned and Yesubai appointed regent? Should Shivaji be crowned and Rajaram appointed regent? Yesubai herself suggested a solution of the problem. 'Let there be no coronation ceremony,' she said, 'but let Shivaji be considered king and Rajaram regent.' This question decided, the council debated on the plan of campaign. Pralhad Niraji's weighty eloquence won alike the minds of the statesmen and the soldiers. Discipline should be at once restored to the army, and Shivaji's regulations as to the deposit of all plunder in the royal treasury strictly enforced. The forts should be re-armed with artillery and their walls repaired. They should be amply provisioned and strongly garrisoned. While the Moghuls wasted their time in sieges, a field army should be formed by local levies and reinforcements from the Carnatic. Let Rajaram command the army, while Yesubai and Prince Shivaji remained behind the impregnable defences of Raygad.

When Pralhad's plan had been approved, Rajaram rose to address the queen and her council. He had been born in 1661 and was thus in his twenty-ninth year, but the great king was ten years younger when he planned the liberation of the Maratha people. In every quality save experience, Rajaram was eminently fitted to bear the mighty burden now placed upon his shoulders. His person was noble and commanding, his manners courteous and pleasing. From the accession of Sambhaji and the failure of Soyarabai's plot, he had lived a prisoner in Raygad. His confinement had been neither close nor harsh. But snares lay all around him and his every word was reported to his jealous brother. A single false step would have ruined him,

but like his contemporary, William of Nassau, he learned so to bridle his tongue that it never disclosed the secrets of his heart. A captive during adolescence, he was not exposed to the temptations that ruined Sambhaji. Thus when called upon to save his father's kingdom, he brought to his task a cautious, discerning mind, a vigour unimpaired by vice and a spirit that no danger could appal, no disaster dismay.

Part of Rajaram's speech has been preserved.<sup>1</sup> He begged his hearers to abandon any resentment that they still might have against the dead king. Let their thoughts dwell on Shivaji rather than on his son, and let them transfer to the young prince all the love and loyalty which they or their fathers had once felt for the great king. For, in truth, their young sovereign was the reincarnation of the dead hero. Had not Shivaji foretold that he would be born again as Yesubai's son?<sup>2</sup> Had not Bhavani told Shivaji that his namesake would rule long and gloriously and conquer all India from Attock to Rameshwaram? 'I am but the prince's servant;' continued Rajaram, 'you must, it is true, give me your obedience, but your loyalty and devotion you must keep for my master. Do but this and I am confident that we shall not only save the kingdom, but bring to pass the prophecy of the goddess.' With these inspiring words he bound himself by an oath to serve the prince diligently and faithfully. The other councillors did likewise and left the council chamber. That evening Rajaram and his two wives left Raygad. He had been first married to Jankibai, a daughter of Prataprao Gujar, but she had died in giving birth to a daughter named Soyarabai, afterwards the wife of Bajaji Nimbalkar of Phaltan. Thereafter Rajaram married two ladies, one the famous Tarabai, the daughter of Hambirrao Mohite; the other Rajabai, daughter of Ghatge of Kagal. With Rajaram went Pralhad Niraji, Khando Ballal Chitnis, Santaji Ghorpade, Dhanaji Jadav and Khanderao Dabhade. Before descending the sides of the steep cliff, Rajaram paid a last visit to Yesubai. They had always been attached to each other and Yesubai's kindness had done much to soften the rigours of Rajaram's prison. He laid his head at her feet and his voice broke. But the brave lady sternly repressed her own sorrow and, placing her hand on Rajaram's head, said to him, 'There is no cause for grief. Victory will surely be yours and you will reconquer your father's kingdom.' Rajaram rose, embraced Prince Shivaji, and said farewell.

Just as Shivaji would have done, Rajaram first went to Pratapgad to invoke the blessing of Bhavani. But as he went, he inspected the fortresses that lay on the road and had them provisioned and armed. Everywhere the garrisons hailed with enthusiasm his advent. The charm of his address won all their hearts and from his name men drew a fortunate omen. Through the countryside the saying ran that just as in olden times Raja Ram of Ayodhya had conquered the demons of Lanka, so the new Rajaram would drive from the land the demons of Delhi. At Pratapgad the prince prostrated himself

<sup>1</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar*.

<sup>2</sup> This prophecy is to be found at the end of *Sabhasad Bakhar*.

before Bhavani's image and prayed earnestly for her benediction. When he had ended his prayer, so the story runs, a handful of flowers fell from the goddess' hand upon the young man's head. The prince, confident that he had been vouchsafed a sign, gathered the flowers and left Pratapgad filled with fresh hopes. His next visit was to Ramdas' shrine at Parali. Ramdas had died in 1681 and, after his death, Sambhaji had erected on the summit of Parali a shrine in his honour. He had also allotted money for an *utsav* or religious festival, from the first to the tenth of the dark half of the Hindu month of *Magh*, in remembrance of the saint's death. The conduct of the festival he had assigned to Akka, a child widow, whom Ramdas had taken as a disciple. Akka received the prince and led him to the shrine, where lay exposed for worship the sandals worn by the saint. Beneath them Rajaram prayed to the dead man's spirit to give him counsel no less precious than that which during his life he had given to the great king. Here again, so it is said, flowers fell on the prince as a token that his prayer had been heard. Akka picked them up and put them with a coco-nut into Rajaram's hands. Sure now of the goddess' help and the saint's advice, the prince bent all his energies to the task before him.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XX

### THE GREAT MOGHUL OFFENSIVE

#### THE CAPTURE OF RAYGAD AND THE FLIGHT OF RAJARAM

A.D. 1689 TO 1690

UPON Sambhaji's death the emperor regarded the conquest of the Deccan as all but completed. He discharged numbers of his Hindu soldiers, who at once flocked round Rajaram's standard. Nevertheless Aurangzib did not mean to return to Delhi until Raygad had fallen. He sent Itkad Khan,<sup>2</sup> a son of his prime minister Asad Khan, with heavy guns and a large army to reduce it. A daring plan occurred to the fertile mind of Santaji Ghorpade. The talents of Ramchandra, the finance minister, had enabled him to equip an army of forty thousand men. This force was under the immediate command of Dhanaji Jadav. It was, however, too small to achieve anything in open battle against the innumerable battalions of the emperor. So Santaji Ghorpade suggested that it should establish itself at Phaltan and from that base draw to itself by a series of false attacks the attention of the Moghul generals. Santaji himself with a body of horse would raid the emperor's camp at Tulapur, and if possible kill Aurangzib in the middle of his army. Dhanaji Jadav approved the plan and gave Santaji two thousand troopers with Vithoji Chavan as

<sup>1</sup> *Chitnis Sakhar* and *Ramdas Charitra*. The festival to Ramdas begun by Sambhaji is still observed. Ramdas died on the 9th of the dark half of *Magh*, *Shake*, 1603.

<sup>2</sup> Manucci, *Storia de Mogor*, Vol. II.



RAJARAM MAHARAJ (Shivaji's younger son)



his second-in-command. Vithoji Chavan was the son of one Ranoji Chavan, who had long served under Shivaji. He fell on field service at a place called Ghalikota, leaving a baby son called Yithoji. But the Chavans were kinsmen of the house of Ghorpade and Maloji Ghorpade obtained for Vithoji Chavan while still a boy a charge in the army. There he won the close friendship of his cousin Santaji and on that account was now appointed his lieutenant.

Santaji and his daring band, starting at dusk, kept to the hills as far as Jejuri, the famous shrine of the god Khandoba. Then descending by the Diva pass they rested by day in the woods below the hills. At midnight they set out for Tulapur. They had ridden but six miles when they met a large body of Moghul horse. To these they explained that they were a body of Maratha cavalry, furnished by the Shirke nobles, many of whom had, after the failure of their plot, taken service under Aurangzib. Allowed to pass on, they met no further obstacle, and in the early dawn reached the imperial camp. Slipping through the sleeping sentries, they made a sudden rush at the emperor's tent. They cut the tent ropes and killed everyone inside. Luckily for Aurangzib, he was sleeping elsewhere, but the Marathas cut the gold tops off his tent poles and carried them away in triumph. Santaji Ghorpade was too prudent to return by the road he had come. He fell back on Sinhgad, then held for the young king by Sidoji Gujar, a son of Prataprao Gujar. He stayed in Sinhgad for two days. Then leaving there his wounded, he took his troopers down the Bhor ghat and falling upon the rear of Itikad's army round Raygad, carried off five of the imperial war elephants. With this booty Santaji Ghorpade presented himself before Rajaram at Panhala. Rajaram distributed to the successful commander and his officers rich clothes and titles. To Santaji Ghorpade he gave the title of Mamlakatmadar, to his brothers Bahirji and Maloji Ghorpade the titles of Hindurao and Amir ul Umra. Vithoji Chavan was styled Himat Bahadur. Lastly, prompted by Ramachandra Bavdekar, the regent appointed Santaji Ghorpade commander-in-chief in the place of the gallant Hambirrao Mohite. This raid had great indirect consequences. The raiders, it is true, failed to compass Aurangzib's death, their chief object. But the gain in the army's morale was immense and every Maratha soldier from Jinji to Raygad deemed the stroke a fortunate beginning to King Shivaji's reign. While these honours were being distributed at Panhala, Dhanaji Jadav with the main army repulsed an attack on his position at Phaltan and with some of the enemy's captured guns rejoined Santaji Ghorpade at Panhala. There he received the title of Jaysingrao, or Lion of Victory.

Unhappily this success was soon overshadowed by a terrible calamity, namely the capture of Raygad, together with King Shivaji and his mother Yesubai. Determined at all costs to take Raygad, the emperor continued to send reinforcements to Itikad Khan who was soon able to invest Panhala as well. Rajaram, who was in Panhala, slipped just as his father had done through the besieging lines and fled to Vishalgad. But fresh reinforcements enabled Itikad Khan to invest Vishalgad also and so prevent Rajaram from making any

further efforts to harass the besiegers of Raygad. The great ponderance of the Moghul forces and the vigour with which the siege was conducted, affected the spirit of the defenders. At the same time Itikad Khan sent messages to Yesubai that, if the fortress surrendered, he would guarantee her safety and that of her son Yesubai, still uncertain whether or not to yield, made Itikad Khan swear on the *Koran* that he would protect her and Shivaji against the cruelty of the emperor. Itikad Khan did so. But before Yesubai could surrender Raygad, she was forestalled by the military governor, Suryaji Pisal. He had, or pretended to have, claims to be *deshmukh* or hereditary revenue officer of Wai. He sent word to Itikad Khan that if he promised to get him made *deshmukh* he would throw open the gates of Raygad. Itikad Khan gave his promise and secured the fortress (October 19, 1689).<sup>1</sup> He kept his word both to Yesubai and to Suryaji Pisal. The latter Itikad Khan took to the emperor, and asked him to give Suryaji Pisal the price of his treachery. Aurangzib received him graciously but insisted upon his adopting Islam. Suryaji did so, and was made *deshmukh* of Wai, but he lived to regret his infamy. Eighteen years later Shahu returned from Delhi. One of his first acts was to put to death Suryaji Pisal and several of his family in revenge for the long captivity which he had himself endured.<sup>2</sup>

The sworn faith of Itikad Khan would hardly have shielded Yesubai and her son had she not found a friend in the emperor's second daughter Zinatunnissa. Between the death of Shah Jehan and her own death in September 1681, Aurangzib's sister, Jahanara, had been the first lady at court. She controlled the emperor's seraglio and bore the title of Begam Sahib, or the Princess Royal. On her demise the emperor appointed to the vacant post his second daughter Zinatunnissa, who had never married. Zinatunnissa greeted Yesubai as a sister and adopted prince Shivaji as her son. The Maratha chroniclers love to repeat a strange explanation of her kindly conduct. In 1666 she had, as a girl, seen Shivaji's gallant bearing in the imperial hall at Agra and from that time on had conceived a regard for the Maratha leader. Afterwards when Sambhaji asked for her hand as the price of his apostasy, she treated the request as a genuine offer of marriage and thereafter deemed her faith pledged to the dead king. In memory of him she treated Yesubai as her co-wife and Shivaji as her own child. However this may be, her help proved of the utmost service to the young king. The emperor wished to convert the boy to Islam, but on Zinatunnissa's entreaty agreed to accept in his place Khandoji Gujar,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is the date given by Sardesai *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 617. Burgess gives the date as October 28. (*Muharram* 15 H 1101.)

<sup>2</sup> The treachery of Suryaji Pisal is not mentioned in the *bakhars*, but is everywhere believed in and repeated. Grant Duff rightly accepted the story. The Musulman descendants of Suryaji Pisal still live at Ozarde near Wai on good terms with their Hindu kinsmen. See *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 617. See also p. 195, *Sanads and Letters*, by Purushotam Mawji and D. B. Parasnis.

<sup>3</sup> Shahu afterwards gave Khandoji Gujar the *deshmukhi* right of sixty villages near Parali. His descendants still profess Islam although their customs and manners are Hindu.

a son of Prataprao Gujar who, to save his master's religion, offered himself as a convert. Thereafter the emperor looked with a kindly eye on his enemy's son whom he called Sahu, or the good one, as opposed to his grandfather and father whom he always abused as thieves and robbers. This nickname Sahu, pronounced Shahu, the young king afterwards adopted as his royal title<sup>1</sup>

On the capture of Raygad all that remained of Shivaji's treasure, all the records of the Maratha government, the royal horses and elephants with their state trappings and the golden throne made by the great king for his coronation, fell into Itukad Khan's hands. So did a mistress of Sambhaji and his natural son Madansing. As a reward for this splendid success Itukad Khan was given the title of Zulfikar Khan and ordered to reduce Panhala. The Maratha commandant was Ghatge of Kagal, the ancestor of both the present chiefs of that name. He made a gallant defence. He repulsed numerous assaults and, so the tale runs, he once made so terrible a slaughter of the storming party that he was able to make a platform of their heads and fire cannon from it into the Moghul trenches. At last the emperor with large reinforcements joined Zulfikar Khan. Ghatge wrote to Ramchandra Bavdekar for help. But the Finance Minister had no troops to send him and advised his surrender on the best terms he could get. On receiving this message Ghatge opened negotiations with the emperor. Aurangzib, weary of the siege, offered to confirm Ghatge as chief of Kagal and to give him a post on the imperial staff with the title of Sarjerao. Ghatge accepted the offer and surrendered the fort, but to convince the regent that he meant on the first chance to return to his allegiance, he sent to Jinji his brothers with all his valuables and personal effects. The fall of Miraj followed shortly on the fall of Panhala (April 1690).

In his stronghold of Vishalgad, Rajaram had foreseen that as soon as Panhala fell the emperor would lead his entire army to the siege of the former fortress. Thus to stay at Vishalgad was merely to court capture and a cruel death. He held a council of his chief officers and told them that the time had come to carry out the great king's strategic plan and, leaving Maharashtra, to fall back on Jinji. That fortress would be defended to the last, while the field army would strike blow after blow at the long line of the emperor's communications. Ramchandra Bavdekar would remain in the western Deccan to organize such resistance as was still possible. It was a momentous occasion. To realize the desperate character of the regent's plan, the reader must imagine for a moment that the French army had been beaten on the Marne and that the French government had decided to evacuate France and withdraw to Gibraltar, leaving bands of *francs-tireurs* to harass, as best they could, the German communications. An even closer parallel will perhaps be found in the retreat of the Serbian army

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Rajwade has tried, unsuccessfully as I think, to refute this story and to prove that the word Shahu is a corruption of Shahaji, the boy's real name. But in an extant *Samad* given by Shahu in 1710 the king is referred to as Shivrampati. His name, therefore, could never have been Shahaji.



to Corfu and its subsequent advance from Salonika. The Maratha chiefs hesitated, as well they might even though Rajaram's plan had been handed down to him by Shivaji himself. Finally it was settled that the garrisons of Vishalgad and of such other strong places as still held out for the king should be left to defend them. Rajaram and his chief officers should split up into small groups and, disguised as religious pilgrims, go on foot from Vishalgad to Jinji. Ahead of them went runners to warn the viceroy Harji Mahadik and Nilo Pingle, Moro Pingle's son and now Harji Mahadik's lieutenant, of their coming, so that they could send bodies of cavalry to meet them when they reached their neighbourhood. One night Rajaram with Santaji Ghorpade, Dhanaji Jadav, Khanderao Dabhade, Pralhad Niraji and Khando Ballal Chitnis, all dressed as Lingayat pilgrims,<sup>1</sup> left Vishalgad fort. They clung as long as they could to the Sahyadri hills. Going due south they halted at Sonda. Thence they went to Bednur where the rani, a feudatory of the Maratha king, welcomed the fugitives. But the news of Rajaram's flight had reached the ears of the emperor. All the imperial officers in southern India were warned and their vigilance commanded. Some of the groups were surprised and killed. Rajaram and his party reached Bangalore safely. This place, as I have already mentioned, had fallen into Moghul hands during the dispute between Harji Mahadik and Keshav Pingle, and a close watch was kept for the Maratha fugitives. The royal party halted at the rest-house. There Rajaram's servants began to wash their master's feet. One servant poured water over them, another brought a towel and got ready to dry them. The deference paid by these servants to Rajaram, so inconsistent with the equality of pilgrims, aroused the suspicions of some other travellers. They spoke Kanarese and began in their own tongue to discuss the incident and the possibility that the party were political fugitives. In the end they resolved to go to the fort and tell the Musulman commandant their suspicions. Happily, one of Rajaram's comrades understood Kanarese and, when the travellers left the rest-house, he informed the regent and his companions of their peril. The devoted loyalty of Khando Ballal Chitnis found a way of escape. The regent, he said, Santaji Ghorpade, Dhanaji Jadav and Khanderao Dabhade should go by one route, Pralhad Niraji and one or two others should go by another route. He, one Parasnis and the regent's servants would stay behind and stoutly maintain their character as pilgrims. When they had baffled the enquiries of the imperial officers, they would all meet at a given spot. The generous offer of Khando Ballal was accepted and the regent and Pralhad Niraji left by different ways. An hour or two later the commandant of the fort with a band of armed men came to the rest-house and, seizing Khando Ballal and the servants, began sharply to question them. Khando Ballal, with an assurance as admirable as his devotion, pleaded that he and the three or four men with him were poor pilgrims to Rameshwaram.<sup>2</sup> The others who had

<sup>1</sup> In one *Sanad* they are said to have been disguised as *kaphdi*, i.e., cloth-sellers.

<sup>2</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar*.

left were chance acquaintances made on the road. As their destination was different, they had now taken a different path. The commandant still doubted and had Khando Ballal and his companions flogged and then made them stand in the sun with stones on their heads. Finally he had bags full of hot ashes tied over their faces. Neither pain nor fear extorted anything from the pilgrims. The commandant began to think that their tale might be true. He threw them into prison. There they refused food on the plea that as pilgrims they could not eat in confinement. Convinced at last of the truth of their plea, he let them all go. In a few days they caught up the regent and the rest of the fugitives. From Bangalore onwards no further mishap befell them. Near Jinji they met a Maratha force led by Harji Mahadik and Nilo Pingle. The viceroy greeted the regent with every mark of respect and escorted him with great pomp and ceremony to Jinji, which now became the new capital of the Marathas (April 1690).<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE GREAT MOGHUL OFFENSIVE

#### THE SIEGE OF JINJI

A.D. 1690 TO 1698

THE emperor had hoped that the presence in his camp of the young King Shivaji, or Shahu as I shall hereafter call him, would split the Marathas into factions. But his hopes were frustrated by the generosity of Yesubai and the loyalty of Rajaram. After Shahu's capture, Rajaram refused to sit on the state throne but presided at the meetings of his council, seated only on a village cot. He acted thus lest talebearers should say to the captive king that his uncle had usurped his throne. At Jinji, however, he received a letter from Yesubai, urging him to assume the insignia of royalty and so leave no loophole to those who might, on the ground that their king was a prisoner, decline to fight for the Maratha cause. Rajaram followed her advice. But at the same time he publicly announced that he would reign only so long as the rightful king lay in prison.

Having assumed the royal insignia, Rajaram appointed the eight ministers required by Shivaji's constitution.

1 As Peshwa, or Prime Minister, he appointed Nilo Moro Pingle, the son of Moro Pingle.

2 He appointed as *Amatya*, or Finance Minister, Janardan Hanmante, the son of Raghunath Hanmante,<sup>2</sup> the former viceroy of Jinji, who had so manfully warned Sambhaji against evil deeds and evil counsellors. Ramchandra Bavdekar who had held that office both under Shivaji and Sambhaji, was relieved

<sup>1</sup> Paper 347 in Rajwade, *Marathi Itihasanchi Sadhane*, Volume XV is dated April 1690. It contains the news of Rajaram's arrival at Jinji.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix.

of it and created viceroy of Maharashtra with the title of Hakumat Panha, which implied that, within the viceroyalty his powers were equal to the king's.

3. The *Pant Sachiv*, or Accountant-General, was Shankar Malhar Nargundkar.

4. The post of *Mantri*, or Home Member, was conferred on Shamjirao Pinde

5. The office of *Sumant*, or Foreign Minister, was given to Mahadji Gadadhar.

6. Shrikaracharya Kalkavkar was made *Panditrao* and given charge of all ecclesiastical matters.

7. The post of *Sarnyayadish*, or Chief Justice, was bestowed on Niraji Ravaji.

8. The post of *Senapati*, or Commander-in-Chief, was given to Santaji Ghorpade. He had already been appointed to the chief command by Rajaram. But he had in the interval been guilty of gross insubordination. He had been ordered by Ramchandra Bavdekar to raise the siege of Panhala. But, leaving Panhala to its fate, he had swept along the valley of the Tungabhadra and finally occupied Gooty. His intention was to create a sanctuary for himself in case Jinji fell. As a punishment for this disobedience, Ramchandra Bavdekar summarily degraded Santaji from his high office and gave it to Mahadji Pansambal, a brave but old and unenterprising soldier. He had since died and Rajaram restored Santaji Ghorpade to his former command. None of the eight seats in council was given to Pralhad Niraji, but Rajaram had not forgotten his eminent merits. He created especially for him the office of *Pratimdh* or the king's mirror and gave him a precedence superior to seven of the eight ministers and equal to that of the Peshwa himself.

Having thus formed his cabinet, Rajaram bestowed a number of minor offices and dignities<sup>1</sup> and sent messengers throughout Maharashtra to announce his safe arrival at Jinji and his assumption of the royal title. The news of Rajaram's safety and the establishment of the monarchy gave fresh vigour to Ramchandra Bavdekar and those who with him were *loyally struggling in Maharashtra for the royal cause*. Ramchandra had less difficulty in collecting revenue and in obtaining supplies. His chief task now was the reorganization of the Maratha army. Its headquarters were partly at Jinji and partly in the Deccan. But the country between was overrun by Hindu soldiers of all castes, deserters from Sambhaji, troopers discharged from the imperial service, or the remnants of the old armies of Bijapur and Golconda. They caused some losses to the Moghuls, but far greater losses to the peasantry, and by plundering the countryside in the name of the Maratha king were making the name of the Marathas hateful all over southern India. The most prominent of the freebooters were two brothers, Babaji and Rupaji Bhosle. They had once been captains in Shivaji's service but had turned marauders,

<sup>1</sup> They are given at length in *Chitnis Bakhar*.

and they harried the Moghul posts with merciless perseverance. As they and their followers carried no weapons but spears, the word *bhalerai*, or spear rule, came into use to designate the depredations of free lances. Ramchandra Bavdekar managed to attach the two brothers<sup>1</sup> to the royal cause. Other bandits were hunted down by Santaji Ghorpade, who gave them the choice of death or enrolment in Rajaram's army.

The emperor halted for a time between two opinions, namely, whether he should remain in the Deccan until he had conquered it fort by fort, or whether he should follow Rajaram to Jinji. The wisest course would probably have been at once to besiege Jinji, but had he done so, the whole Deccan would again have burst into flame. On the other hand, if he left Rajaram alone in Jinji, the king would soon conquer the whole rich eastern seaboard and make Jinji an impregnable stronghold. The choice was a difficult one. The emperor in the end decided to continue the subjugation of the Deccan, but at the same time to send a small force to keep Rajaram in check until the emperor could engage him with his main army. This scheme might have succeeded but for the activity of Santaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadav. These enterprising commanders, aided by Pralhad Niraji, soon collected fresh bodies of troops and raised them to a high state of efficiency. When the Moghul force appeared that was to keep in check Rajaram, Santaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadav at once attacked and destroyed it.

Relieved of immediate danger, Rajaram resolved to send for his wives from Vishalgad to Jinji. Since his flight he had been living with a mistress called Sagunabai, by whom he had a natural son afterwards well known as Raja Karna. But Yesubai in one of her letters from the Moghul camp urged him to send for his family. If he himself led an irregular life, he could not restore to the army the discipline which it needed. It was impossible that the royal ladies should travel across all southern India, overrun as it was by soldiers and free lances. Tarabai, moreover, had recently given birth to a son named Shivaji.<sup>1</sup> It was therefore resolved to send them by sea. The three queens, Tarabai, Rajasbai and Ambikabai, in charge of Visaji Prabhu, shipped at Yeshwantgad on the Konkan coast and, doubling Rameshwaram, landed near Pondicherry, whence they went by land to Jinji. There in 1693 Rajasbai gave birth to a son named Sambhaji and Ambikabai to a daughter who died a few days later.

In the meantime fortune had smiled but coldly on the emperor's operations in the Deccan. The effect of Ramchandra Bavdekar's vigorous viceroyalty and of the successes and reorganization at Jinji was seen in the gallant defences of the Maratha strongholds. In the cold weather of 1691 the emperor, it is true, reduced Sinhgad and Purandar, but his every movement was harassed by the Maratha horse. After they had destroyed the detachment sent against Jinji, Rajaram sent Santaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadav to command the

<sup>1</sup> Shivaji, Tarabai's son, was born early in 1691.

Maratha forces in the Deccan Santaji Ghorpade first surprised the Moghul garrison at Wai. He soon followed up this success by the recapture of Miraj fort. At the same time Rajaram distributed among his nobles large grants of land formerly occupied by Shivaji but now in the possession of the emperor. These grants encouraged the Maratha leaders to equip troops at their own expense and with them to establish strong places in the midst of the Moghul possessions. Bands of Marathas appeared in Khandesh, south Gujerat, the Central Provinces and the country now known as the Nizam's Dominions to enforce grants bestowed at Jinji. Patankar established himself in the valley of Patan and levied *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi*, all round Wai and Karhad. Pawar ravaged the Central Provinces so successfully that Rajaram conferred on him the title of Vishwasrao, or the Man of Trust. Atole plundered the valley of the Godavari. At the same time Ramchandra Bavdekar raised large levies from the *dhangurs*, or shepherds, of the western hills, with which he retook a number of Deccan walled villages. At last the emperor saw that so long as any member of Shivaji's house remained at large, his plans of conquest would never be realized. He therefore sent a considerable army under Zulfikar Khan to besiege Jinji. The Marathas, aware of his coming, tried to bar his passage. But Zulfikar Khan was a skilful commander. Defeating the Marathas he continued his march towards Jinji. On the way he took several fortified places and at last sat down before the Maratha capital (1691).

Zulfikar Khan's forces were not large enough to invest Jinji and it was too strong to be battered down by the Moghul artillery. Indeed from the first he must have perceived that the capture of that fortress was beyond his resources, for he soon entered into a compact with the garrison that there should be no real hostilities between them. His object seems to have been the foundation of an independent kingdom on the death of the aged emperor. The regent readily accepted and observed the compact, since it allowed him to send the bulk of his garrison as reinforcements to the Deccan.

In the year 1692 the recapture of Rajgad and Panhala were the most important Maratha successes. As it will be remembered, the great king had in 1647<sup>1</sup> fortified a hill called Morbad and had changed its name to Rajgad. During the monsoon of 1688 it had been taken by the Moghuls and one Abu Khair Khan was appointed its commandant. The fort was a very strong one, hardly less so than Purandar or Sinhgad, and probably on that account had only a slender garrison. Suddenly a Maratha force appeared before it and demanded its surrender. Firoz Jang had received intelligence of the Maratha movements and at once detached a large contingent to relieve Abu Khair. It came too late, for the fortress had already been betrayed by the craven fears of its governor. Dreading an assault in which he might have perished, he had surrendered the fortress on the promise of a safe conduct for himself, his family and his property. The Maratha general gave him a pass through his lines and proceeded

<sup>1</sup> See p. 22.

to occupy Rajgad. But his soldiers, less scrupulous than their master, relieved Abu Khair of his money and clothes, and his women of their jewellery. In this plight he met Firoz Jang's relieving column. The emperor, justly incensed, dismissed him from the army and ordered him to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca. The successful Maratha leader was Shankar Narayan Gandekar. He was the son of Naro Mukund, the hereditary *kulkarni*, or village accountant, of Gandapur. He took service as a clerk under Moro Pingale and afterwards under Ramchandra Bavdekar. In 1692 the viceroy ordered him to raise a corps of Mawal infantry. This he did with such success that he was ordered to surprise Rajgad. My readers will be interested to learn that he was the ancestor of that loyal nobleman H. H. the Pant Sachiv of Bhor.

The captor of Panhala was another clerk in the service of Ramchandra Bavdekar. The story runs that in Kinhai, a small village in the Wai taluka, lived a pious Deshasth Brahman named Krishnaji. He was a devout worshipper of the goddess Parvati and yearly used to visit Aundh, where she had an ancient temple. As the years passed and he grew too old for the journey, he prayed to Parvati in her temple at Aundh to come and stay near him at Kinhai. That night the goddess appeared in a dream to Krishnaji and promised to follow him to Kinhai provided that on the way he did not turn round to look at her. Krishnaji promised, and when he awoke he started to walk back to Kinhai. As he went, the goddess followed him. He did not look back until he reached the top of some hills. Overcome by fatigue he sat down and without thinking looked back the way he had come. Instantly the goddess changed her form to that of a Maratha woman. It so chanced that just then a *banna* came up driving a bullock-cart filled with bags of sugar. The disguised goddess asked him what he had in his bags. He replied that they were full of salt. He went on his way, but on reaching home found that the sugar actually had changed to salt. In the meantime Krishnaji rose and resumed his march. But the goddess no longer followed him. Hearing at Kinhai of the *banna's* misfortune, he knew that the Maratha woman must have been Parvati and both returned to the spot where they had seen her. The *banna* prayed fervently to the goddess. She relented and turned his bags of salt back into sugar. Krishnaji, feeling sure that Parvati would not go beyond the spot where he had looked back, built on it a temple with a wall round it and called it Sakhargad, or the Fort of Sugar. There he dwelt until his death. His piety was rewarded by the birth of a son called Trimbak who, as his father had done, spent his life in Parvati's service. Trimbak had two sons Madhavrao and Parashuram. In 1674 when in his fifteenth year, Parashuram entered as a lowly-paid clerk the service of Nilo Sondev. There he became the close friend of Nilo Sondev's son Ramchandra Nilkanth. He rose in time to be the latter's confidential secretary. Afterwards he received a military command and distinguished himself by the escalade of Panhala. For this and many subsequent feats of arms Rajaram honoured him with the title of Shamsheer Bahadur, or the Samson of Bravery. This gallant soldier was the ancestor of that

admirable artist and courtly gentleman, the Pant Pratindhi, Chief of Aundh.<sup>1</sup>

In 1693 the Marathas destroyed or captured a number of detachments. Several of these actions have been graphically described by Khafi Khan. In turn Santaji Ghorpade captured and held to ransom Ismail Khan, Rustam Khan, Ali Mardan Khan and Jannisar Khan. According to the Musulman historian, so great was the terror of his name 'that there was no imperial *amir* bold enough to resist him, and every loss he inflicted made the imperial forces quake'. The emperor was at his wits' end and said in public that 'the creature could do nothing, for everything was in the hands of God'. After this confession of impotence he decided to relieve Zulfikar Khan of his command in front of Jinji. This he did in the cold weather of 1693 and ordered Zulfikar Khan to serve under his youngest son, Prince Kam Baksh, whom he sent there with a fresh army. The veteran general was infuriated at his supersession. Although he and his staff went out with all respect to receive the prince, he did his utmost to frustrate his plans and to inflame against him the minds of his brother officers. He was especially successful in exciting against Kam Baksh, Jamdat-ul-Mulk, who was in charge of the civil government of the surrounding country, and Nasrat Jang, whose duty it was to collect the revenue. They declined to recognize the authority of the prince and took upon themselves to reprimand him for some youthful indiscretion. Kam Baksh appealed to the emperor, but he was too deeply engaged in the Deccan to enforce discipline in the Jinji army.

As may be guessed, the Moghul arms made no progress during the quarrels of the commanders. The siege dragged on through 1694 and 1695. The garrison made spirited sorties, destroying the trenches and the outposts, while Santaji Ghorpade held the roads by which the imperial convoys sought to reach the besiegers. So feeble at last did the investing army become, that the Maratha commanders resolved to raise the siege. According to the Maratha chronicler,<sup>2</sup> the Maratha forces numbered at this time nearly a hundred thousand. Of these ten thousand were with Rajaram in Jinji. Twenty thousand were actively opposing the imperial troops in the western Deccan. The remainder were divided into three main divisions each of twenty thousand, commanded respectively by Santaji Ghorpade, Parsoji Bhosle, honoured by the appellation of *Sena Sahib*, or Lord of the Army, and Sindojirao Nimbalkar, to whom Rajaram had given the title of *Sar Lakshkar*, or Chief of the Forces. Lastly, ten thousand men formed a flying column under Dhanaji Jadav.

On hearing of the Maratha advance, Prince Kam Baksh ordered his detached posts to fall back on the besieging army. This order was easier to give than to execute. Those nearest the prince's headquarters reached them safely. But those at a distance were not

<sup>1</sup> The Aundh Chiefs still worship Parvati at Sakhargad under the name of *Sakhargad Nivasi*, or She who dwells at Sakhargad. Parashuram received the title of *Mukhya Pradhan* in 1695.

<sup>2</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar*.

so fortunate and suffered severely on the march. A detachment under the command of one Ismail Khan<sup>1</sup> was first attacked by Dhanaji Jadav. For some time the Moghul commander maintained a running fight. At last he took refuge in a walled village called Kokar Khan. The battle ceased during the night. Next morning Ismail Khan tried to continue his march. But he was brought to bay and forced to surrender with his whole command. Santaji Ghorpade moved further afield. At Caveripak on the Palar river, twenty miles north of Jinji, lay a Moghul division under Ali Mardan Khan. Santaji Ghorpade decided to destroy it before attacking the prince's main army.<sup>2</sup> Ali Mardan Khan, unused to Maratha warfare, moved out to meet his enemy. At a critical moment in the fight some new levies that he had raised deserted. He at once ordered a retreat on Jinji. He was soon surrounded and his division, with its entire transport, arms and equipment fell into the hands of the Marathas.

Having thus cleared their flanks, the Maratha commanders moved towards Jinji. By this time the prince, exasperated by the insubordination of Zulfikar Khan and his confederates, had in turn begun to listen to Rajaram's envoys. They assured him that the emperor was on the point of death and that if Kam Baksh would but join Rajaram, the Maratha armies would secure him the succession to the imperial throne. The assurances of the envoys were confirmed by the rumours and the gossip of the camp, and Kam Baksh agreed to desert with the troops upon whom he could most confidently rely. Fortunately for the emperor he had shortly before sent his prime minister, Asad Khan, Zulfikar Khan's father, to report on the progress of the siege. He came to hear of the plot and informed his son. They kept a careful watch on the prince's movements. One night they noticed unusual preparations in his quarters. At the same time the garrison sallied vigorously against other parts of the Moghul lines. Certain that the prince was about to betray his father, they went to his tents and asked the cause of his preparations. He replied vaguely that he expected a night attack and was getting ready to meet it. Asad Khan assured him that his information was faulty and sternly directed him to countermand his order. The prince, seeing that his treachery had been detected, sullenly obeyed. In the night Zulfikar Khan brought from another part of the siege works a large body of loyal troops and massed them round Kam Baksh's quarters. Next morning Asad Khan and Zulfikar Khan went on elephants inside the prince's zenana and seeing his person, imprisoned him in the fort of Bhindwasni, better known under its English corruption Wandiwash.

While Zulfikar Khan was trying to restore order in the imperial camp, Santaji Ghorpade ceaselessly attacked it from without. In no long time the besieging army was itself besieged and forced to enter into a truce with the garrison. The terms were that Zulfikar Khan should retire unmolested to Wandiwash and await further orders from the emperor. Both Asad Khan and Santaji Ghorpade opposed the truce. The latter was confident that in its present state he could

<sup>1</sup> Scott, *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 87.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.



take or destroy the entire investing army. But Rajaram hoped that the aged emperor would at last make peace and release Shahu. Asad Khan did not wish to cease hostilities without the emperor's orders, but while he was trying to win over to his own views Zulfikar Khan, the imperial artillery mutinied and forced on him the acceptance of the armistice (1696).

When the emperor learned that the siege of Jinji had been raised, he indignantly summoned to his presence both Asad Khan and the prince, and reprimanded Asad Khan severely. The prince he pretended to pardon, but sometime later<sup>1</sup> ordered his strict confinement. He sent Zulfikar Khan reinforcements and commanded him to renew the siege. The truce had already been broken. Santaji Ghorpade, who had strongly opposed it, was determined to interpret it strictly. He made no attack on the retreating Moghul army. But when it had reached Wandiwash he deemed himself freed from his obligations. Hearing that a Moghul force under Kasim Khan, the governor of the Bijapur Carnatic,<sup>2</sup> was escorting a quantity of supplies to Wandiwash, he resolved to intercept it. Ghorpade came up with the convoy near Caverpak on the Palar river. Kasim Khan took shelter behind its walls. Zulfikar Khan, hearing of his straits, marched to his relief and escorted him safely to Wandiwash. Santaji Ghorpade, hauled of his prey, attacked and took a number of forts with their Moghul garrisons. Zulfikar Khan at once turned back, retook the forts and entering Tanjore took from Shahaji, Vyankoji's son, a large indemnity. Returning northwards, he led out his army from Wandiwash and renewed the siege of Jinji. Unable to cope with Zulfikar Khan's military skill and the large forces at his disposal, Santaji Ghorpade entered the southern province of Bijapur.<sup>3</sup> The emperor ordered Kasim Khan to intercept him. His recent successful revictualling of the Moghul army had turned Kasim Khan's head. Near Dudheri fort, twenty-five miles north-east of Chitaldroog, he allowed his advance guard to be surprised. He hastened to their help, but was soon himself surrounded. All that day he fought and passed the night under arms. After a three days' battle he was driven into Dudheri fort, which Santaji at once invested. The siege lasted a month and the Musulman soldiers lived on the flesh of their horses and baggage camels. The Hindus starved or deserted. At last Kasim Khan poisoned himself, and his second-in-command Rohulla Khan opened negotiations with the besieging force. Santaji Ghorpade, who had no wish to be encumbered with prisoners, demanded and obtained a promise of seven lakhs of rupees as ransom. He let the officers take with them their horses and clothes. The soldiers he let take such effects as they could carry. The guns, treasure and transport were the spoils of war.

Santaji Ghorpade had no sooner dispersed Kasim Khan's army than he heard of a large Moghul force under Himat Khan advancing

<sup>1</sup> Scott, *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 94.

<sup>2</sup> The Bijapur Carnatic was the southern part of the old Bijapur kingdom.

<sup>3</sup> Scott, *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 91.

at all speed to Kasim Khan's relief. Rajaram and the Jinji garrison had skilfully delayed its advance, until the other Moghul force had been rendered harmless. He then let it proceed to its destruction. Santaji divided his army into two. One division attacked Himat Khan and then, as if beaten, retreated into a forest where the second division was concealed. Himat Khan followed blindly into the forest paths by which Santaji had fled. When the entire Moghul army was entangled in the woods, musketry fire broke out on all sides of them, from the branches of the trees, from thorn thickets and from pampas grass. Himat Khan fell, shot through the head. In a little time those of his troops who survived surrendered at discretion (1696).<sup>1</sup>

These two important successes tempted Santaji Ghorpade to try once more to relieve Jinji, but Zulfikar Khan went out in person to meet him and severely defeated him some miles to the north of Jinji. Santaji realized that with Zulfikar Khan in sole command of the investing army, it was impossible to raise the siege. By 1687 it had become a blockade and little blood was shed save when Zulfikar Khan's second-in-command, Daud Khan, from time to time got drunk and senselessly assaulted the Maratha outposts.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless the blockade was a strict one and no supplies entered the beleaguered town. It was thus all important, before Jinji surrendered from famine, to get Rajaram to a place of safety. About this time, too, the emperor had sent for and warned Asad Khan that, unless his son Zulfikar Khan shortly took Jinji he would be disgraced, and removed from his command. Zulfikar Khan was, therefore, anxious to secure a capitulation on almost any terms. The envoy employed was Khando Ballal Chitnis.<sup>3</sup> He had been sent by Rajaram to convey to the viceroy, Ramachandra Bavdekar, the news of his contemplated escape, but on the way he had been taken and brought before Zulfikar Khan. He managed to secure a private interview and to communicate to the general the regent's wish to escape from the fortress. Zulfikar Khan agreed to let the regent do so, if some plan could be conceived by which no blame would rest on him. At the same time he vigorously pressed the siege and it began to look as if Zulfikar Khan would carry the defences while Rajaram was still in the town. Khando Ballal was at his wits' end. At last he thought of Ganoji and Ramoji Shirke who commanded the siege works to the south-west of Jinji. They had escaped from the Shirke massacre and had taken service with the emperor. At first they haughtily refused any assistance. But Khando Ballal would not be rebuffed. He pleaded earnestly Rajaram's innocence and their own kinship to the unhappy Soyarabai, the regent's mother. At last Ganoji and Ramoji Shirke gave way on the condition of receiving a grant of the revenues of Dabhol in the Konkan. They in turn won over certain officers of the Mohite clan, to which Rajaram's eldest wife Tarabai belonged. Another helper was

<sup>1</sup> *Khafi Khan*, Elliott and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 355; Scott, *Deccan*, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> Wilks, *Historical Sketches of the South of India*, Vol. I, p. 133.

<sup>3</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar*.

found in Nagoji Mane. He was the son of one Rataji Mane who had held a great command in the Bijapur army, where he had won a high reputation for courage. During Rataji's lifetime his son shared with his father the favour of the king of Bijapur. But on Rataji's death, Nagoji quarrelled with the Bijapur court and entered the Delhi service. He now commanded five thousand horse opposite the western gate of Jinji.

Khando Ballal's plan was that Nagoji should make a feigned attack on the western gate. In the confusion Rajaram and his attendants should escape to the Shirke's lines. Zulfikar Khan<sup>1</sup> approved the plan and it was carried out. The same night Nagoji Mane attacked the western gate and Rajaram fled to his kinsmen's camp. Next morning the Shirkes pretended to go on a hunting expedition. With them they took the regent and his attendants disguised as huntsmen. Out of sight of the Moghul army they galloped to a spot fifteen miles away where a large Maratha force commanded by Dhanaji Jadav waited for the fugitive. Dhanaji took charge of Rajaram's person and escorted him to Vellore<sup>2</sup>. There Santaji Ghorpade joined them with his division and after some skirmishes with Moghul horse, the regent reached Vishalgad in December 1697.<sup>3</sup> On Rajaram's flight, Harji Mahadik's son took command of the garrison. But the vigour of Zulfikar Khan's attacks soon afterwards carried the outer walls. In January 1698, Daud Khan came by chance to learn of a path through a small wood up the side of the fortress. Sober for the movement, he examined it and without informing Zulfikar Khan, decided to storm Jinji. He joined with him in the enterprise a Rajput chief called Dalpatrao. The garrison thought the assault to be only one of Daud Khan's drunken outbreaks and paid little heed to it, until Dalpatrao had carried the main defences. The garrison fled to the citadel. But the Moghul forces now entered the town on all sides and the citadel surrendered to Zulfikar Khan. As he had previously promised to do, he handed over Rajaram's wives and their two sons to the Shirkes, who arranged for their return to the western Deccan.<sup>4</sup>

So ended the great siege of Jinji (January 1698). Ending as it did by the storming of the fortress, it might seem that the emperor had been the gainer in the struggle. The contrary, however, was the case. By the time Jinji had fallen, its siege had eaten deeply into the resources of the empire. The Maratha troops had repeatedly shown themselves equal or superior to Moghul armies. The sanctuary created by the great king had done its work. The endless chain of the Moghul communications had been strained to breaking-point. The time was at hand when the Maratha counter-offensive might begin.

<sup>1</sup> I should mention here that Mr. Sardesai thinks that the evidence is against the treason of Zulfikar Khan. I am reluctantly forced to differ from his conclusion.

<sup>2</sup> Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, p. 133.

<sup>4</sup> Chitnis *Bakhar*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE GREAT MOGHUL OFFENSIVE THE LAST EFFORT

#### THE BEGINNING OF THE MARATHA COUNTER-OFFENSIVE

A.D. 1698

HAD the emperor been well advised, he would now have made peace with the Marathas, acknowledged Rajaram as king of the western Deccan and Konkan and devoted his remaining years to the subjugation of Mysore, Travancore, and south-eastern India. Or better still he might, after making peace, have returned to Delhi where his presence was urgently needed. Hindustan had been drained of its wealth and of its best blood in the vain attempt to subdue the south. The Rajput princes were weary of the wild hills and trackless forests of the Deccan and longed to return to their lands and castles in Rajasthan. The emperor, too, was in his seventy-ninth year and although young for his years was unfit any longer to conduct the arduous Maratha war. Nor would Rajaram have refused an offer of peace. He had lost a considerable treasure in Jinji. The finances of the kingdom were in disorder and Maharashtra, overrun in turn by the Moghul and Maratha armies, was fast becoming a desert. Asad Khan, the prime minister, urged Aurangzib to end the Deccan war in any honourable way he could. But the military party pressed on the emperor other views. The military chiefs drew large salaries and made handsome profits out of army contracts. They were loth to end a war from which they drew such ample incomes. They scoffed at the mention of peace. Was Aurangzib to give up his darling scheme of conquering all India in the very hour of its consummation? Were the infidels to deride the crowned saint of Islam in the moment of victory? The emperor had, it is true, passed the allotted span of human existence. But was that not a sign that the Almighty was prolonging his life that he might win the goal which Asad Khan now urged him to abandon?

The emperor was shrewd enough to guess the motives of the military chiefs. But with senile obstinacy he clung to his hope to bring, as Alla-ud-din had done, all India beneath the canopy of Delhi. Asad Khan, however, prevailed on him to open negotiations. But the loyal Rajaram asked for the liberation of Shahu before he would cease operations. The emperor lost his temper at this not unreasonable demand and gladly made it an excuse to dismiss rudely the Maratha envoys. He was confirmed in his views by an event that took place about this time, namely, the murder of Santaji Ghorpade. For a long time past there had been a feud between this distinguished soldier and Dhanaji Jadhav. It began early in Rajaram's reign when Santaji Ghorpade was promoted to the chief command in spite of claims which to Dhanaji, at any rate, seemed superior. So long as Pralhad Niraji lived, his high influence and character curbed the passions

of the angry captains. But in 1697, during the siege of Jinji, Pralhad Niraji had incurred the displeasure of the regent, and broken-hearted by his rebuke, had gone on a pilgrimage to Pandharpur,<sup>1</sup> and had committed suicide before the shine of Krishna Pralhad Niraji's control removed, Dhanaji Jadav resolved to destroy his rival. At this time Santaji Ghorpade at the head of a force numbering twenty-five thousand men was camped<sup>2</sup> some eighteen to twenty miles south of Bijapur. Firoz Jang, with a large body of Moghuls, was advancing against him from the north. When still four or five marches away, he heard of Dhanaji Jadav's intentions. He at once pressed forward to profit by the quarrels of the Maratha generals. In the very presence of the enemy, Dhanaji Jadav attacked Santaji Ghorpade's force. The latter's strict discipline and cruel punishments had made him unpopular with his officers and men. On a concerted signal the bulk of them deserted to Dhanaji Jadav. Santaji fled alone into the western hills followed by Firoz Jang on one side and on the other by his own troops and Dhanaji Jadav's army. He might have escaped but for the tireless pursuit of Nagoji Mane. As will be remembered, Nagoji Mane had helped Rajaram to escape from Jinji and thereafter he had deserted the Moghul cause. He was by birth the *deshmukh*, or hereditary revenue officer, of Mhaswad and he had a bitter private feud with Santaji Ghorpade. As a punishment for some military offence, Santaji had ordered Nagoji Mane's brother to be trampled to death by an elephant.<sup>3</sup> This act Nagoji neither forgot nor forgave. When the others gave up the chase, Mane relentlessly pursued the fugitive. Santaji, thinking that he had shaken off his enemies, dismounted to bathe himself and his horse in a small stream. As he bathed, Nagoji Mane and his men came upon him and killed him. Mane cut off the dead man's head and, putting it in a bag, tied the bag to his saddle, meaning to take it to Dhanaji Jadav. As he rode, the bag became unfastened and fell to the ground. It was picked up shortly afterwards by some of Firoz Jang's scouts, who opened it and recognized the head as that of Santaji Ghorpade. They carried it back to Firoz Jang who sent it by a messenger to Aurangzib. The latter was delighted and gave the messenger the title of Khush Khabar Khan, or Lord among the Bearers of Glad Tidings. The head was paraded by beat of drum through the army and through several of the chief towns of the Deccan. Santaji's death was a great loss to the Maratha cause. For seven years he had been the terror of the Moghul armies, and so great was the fear that prevailed among them both of him and of Dhanaji Jadav that the Musulman troopers used, when their horses refused to drink, to ask them whether they saw the face of Santaji or of Dhanaji in the water.

The emperor, greatly encouraged by the death of this brilliant soldier, devoted himself more zealously than ever to the subjugation of the western Deccan. He determined to take one by one the

<sup>1</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar*.

<sup>2</sup> *Khafi Khan*.

<sup>3</sup> Another account given by Mr Sardesai mentions that Santaji had killed Amritrao Nimbalkar, Nagoji, Mane's father-in-law.

Maratha forts; and having driven the Maratha troops into the plains, to overwhelm them in the open. Had this strategy been adopted earlier, it might have succeeded. But the imperial troops had been so weakened by death and disease, discharges and desertions, that they did not now greatly outnumber the forces of the regent. Captured fortresses needed garrisons to hold them, and the creation of garrisons meant the further diminution of the imperial army. During the siege of Jinji the emperor had been compelled, in order to reinforce Zulfikar Khan, to reduce to a dangerously low number his army in the Deccan. The result was that a number of Deccan forts had passed into Maratha hands. I have already mentioned the recapture in 1692 of Rajgad and Panhala by Shankar Narayan Gandekar and Parashuram Trimbak. In the following year, 1693, Shankar Narayan took Torna and Rohida close to Rajgad and occupied effectively the country between these forts. Sidhoji Gujar, the Maratha *sarkhel*, or admiral, took Suvarnadurg and Vijaydurg on the Konkan coast. On Sidhoji's death the regent conferred the post and title of *sarkhel* on Kanhoji Angre. The original name of the Angres was Sangpal and they claimed, apparently with justice, that they were of pure Rajput descent. Kanhoji's father, Tukoji, had been a sailor in the great king's fleet and Kanhoji had from boyhood served in the Maratha navy. He captured the Kolaba district from the Abyssinians and in course of time recovered a large part of the Konkan seaboard. Vishalgad was retaken by Parashuram Trimbak. After Rajaram's flight the siege had at first languished, but was afterwards pressed with vigour. The viceroy evacuated it with the regular troops, leaving its defence to a body of hillmen. They could not save the fort, but the gallantry of their defence may be judged by the fact that after its fall no less than seven hundred Maratha widows burnt themselves as *satis*. The emperor garrisoned the fort with Maratha officers favourable to his cause under the command of one Krishnaji Bhaskar Pandit<sup>1</sup>. The emperor's choice of a commandant was unfortunate. For afterwards Parashuram Trimbak induced Krishnaji Bhaskar to admit a Maratha force, which destroyed or won over the Moghul garrison.

To discuss the emperor's plan of campaign the regent called his chief officers to Satara, which at Ramchandra's advice he now made his residence. It was a momentous council. Eight years before, the regent, then a youth of high promise, had left his country to the care of Ramchandra Baydekar and had slipped out into the darkness to cross the peninsula in the disguise of a wandering beggar. His chances of escape were but few, yet his death or capture meant the final extinction of Maratha hopes. Through imminent peril he had won his goal and at Jinji had sustained a siege hardly shorter than that of Troy with the skill and valour and more than the fortunes of Hector. He had created armies, he had planned campaigns, he had governed distant provinces. Well-nigh unbearable though his burden

<sup>1</sup> The descendants of Krishnaji Pandit are still to be found in Vishalgad State. *Riyasat I*, p. 638.

was, he had nobly and worthily borne it. Through an endless darkness he had kept alive the flickering flame of his country's independence, and when the emperor thought he had at last crushed him for ever, Rajaram had re-appeared in his own kingdom and had once again hurled defiance at the northern invader.

When the council opened, Ramchandra the viceroy, supported by his lieutenants Parashuram Trimbak and Shankar Narayan, advanced to the regent's seat. Ramchandra said in a grave, clear voice, 'During your Highness' absence from Maharashtra, we, so far as our humble powers permitted, guarded and administered your possessions. Now, with your leave, we return to you your kingdom.' The regent acknowledged the viceroy's speech by praising the manner in which he had discharged the duties of his high office. He lauded the services of Atole, Dabhade, Pawar and Patankar and distributed to them and to others dresses of honour suited to their rank and achievements. He then disclosed to the council his plans. He meant to let the emperor wear out his army besieging the Deccan fortresses, while he and his lieutenants invaded with large bodies of horse the Moghul territories further than they had been invaded for many years. Thus, while the emperor was trying to destroy his bases, the Marathas would retaliate by destroying his. 'The enemy's power is weakened,' concluded Rajaram, 'our troops no longer fear to meet the emperor's. Our task is reaching its close. By the blessing and merit of my father, the divine Shivaji, fortune will crown our efforts with victory.' He then raised Timaji Hanmante, son of Janardanpant Hanmante, to the office of *Pratinidhi* and appointed Ramchandra Bavdekar to his old post of *Amatya*, or finance minister.

Both sides were anxious to strike the first blow. But Aurangzib's preparations were hindered by the extraordinary rise of the Bhima river. For some years past he had established his headquarters at Brahmapuri. It had been fortified as became the residence of the emperor, and his high officers had built themselves costly and luxurious houses. In the monsoon of 1699 the Bhima river, which flowed past Brahmapuri, rose to an unprecedented height and, overflowing its banks, caused immense loss to the imperial army. Between ten and twelve thousand men perished, vast quantities of horses and cattle, tents, arms and equipment were swept away by the raging river. In despair the emperor wrote, on scraps of paper, verses from the *Koran* and with his own hand threw them into the water. When in due course the Bhima subsided, his courtiers ascribed its fall to the holy verses thrown into it. While Aurangzib, *Koran* in hand, was thus battling with the elements, the Maratha counter-offensive began. On Santaji Ghorpade's death, Rajaram had appointed Dhanaji Jadhav to the chief command. As before, the Maratha army was formed into three divisions. Dhanaji Jatav, in addition to his supreme command, led one division. Parashuram Trimbak led the second and Shankar Narayan led the third. Early in 1699 Rajaram took the field with the combined divisions, amounting at least to sixty thousand men; and as the army advanced northwards, it was joined by brigades under Parsoji Bhosle, the founder of the Bhosle house of Nagpur,

Haibatrao Nimbalkar, Nemaġ Sindia,<sup>1</sup> and Atole. This mighty force moved towards the Godavari valley. The Moghul garrisons who tried to resist were overwhelmed. Dhanaji Jadav defeated one large body of imperial troops near Pandharpur. Shankar Narayan cleared another contingent under Sarze Khan out of the Poona district. Entering the valley of the Godavari, Rajaram publicly proclaimed his right to levy from it the *chauth* and the *sardeshmukhi*, the taxes of one-fourth and one-tenth which Shivaji had created. From those villages that could not pay, bonds were taken. From the Godavari valley Rajaram marched into Khandesh and Berar. This time he came not as a mere raider, and to convince the inhabitants that he would give them protection and exercise sovereignty, he divided the country into military districts and left in them strong detachments under distinguished generals. Khanderao Dabhade took command in Baglan and northern Nasik. Parsoji Bhosle was made governor of Berar, Nemaġ Sindia governor of Khandesh and Haibatrao Nimbalkar governor of the valley of the Godavari. Rajaram himself led a large body of cavalry to plunder the rich city of Jalna, some miles south-east of Aurangabad. After the departure of the regent, Nemaġ Sindia won an important success near Nandarbar, a large town some eighty miles east of Surat. Hearing that a Maratha army was in the neighbourhood, a Moghul<sup>2</sup> commander called Hussein Ali Khan, with seven or eight hundred horse and three thousand foot went out with more courage than prudence to meet it. The Moghuls fought well, but they were surrounded and captured. Sindia fixed their ransom at two lakhs of rupees. Hussein Ali Khan managed to find among his friends security for one lakh and eighty thousand. Twenty thousand rupees remained still outstanding. He begged the help of the merchants of Nandarbar. But relying on a Moghul garrison, the merchants refused to pay anything to the Marathas either as ransom or tribute. Hussein Ali Khan found an ingenious way out of his difficulties. He induced Sindia to release him on parole that he might enter Nandarbar and personally interview the reluctant traders. Sindia was then to besiege the town. Two days afterwards Hussein Ali Khan would open the gates to the Marathas. Everything happened as Hussein Ali Khan planned. He found shelter inside Nandarbar and opened the gates to the Maratha army. He then led Sindia to the houses of the chief merchants and took an active part in torturing them until they disgorged their treasures. So effective was the joint action of the Moghul and Maratha commanders that instead of twenty thousand they soon extorted from the rich men of Nandarbar a hundred and seventy thousand rupees. Of these Sindia took a hundred and forty thousand. Hussein Ali Khan was allowed to keep the remainder himself.

In the meantime the emperor had begun his new campaign. Leaving a garrison at Brahmapuri, which he renamed Islampur, he

<sup>1</sup> The real name is Shinde, but I have decided to adhere to the common spelling.

<sup>2</sup> *Khafiz Khan*, Elliott and Dawson, Vol. VII, p. 362.



led out his grand army in October 1699 to reduce the Maratha strongholds. His first object was Vasantgad, a large fort between the Kistna and Koyna rivers. The garrison made a poor defence and surrendered before any real assault had been made.<sup>1</sup> The emperor fancied that he had at last hit upon the true method of subduing the Marathas. With premature bravado, he renamed his conquest Kilid-i-Fateh, or the Key of Victory. He next made a skilful feint towards Panhala, which the Marathas with all speed strengthened and provisioned. Then, turning aside, he hastened by forced marches against the fort of Satara. This fort is a spur of the great Mahableshwar plateau and rises about a thousand feet above the Kistna valley. At its foot nestles the town of Satara, which had recently risen to the dignity of a capital. On December 8, 1699, the emperor pitched his tents in the village of Karanja, where a ruined column still marks the site. To the west between Satara and Parali camped Azim Shah, whose name has been commemorated by the village of Shahpur.<sup>2</sup> At Shendre village, Sharze Khan commanded the southern division of the grand army. A road which he built over the hill is still known as Sarza Khind, or Sharze's Pass. Tarbiyat Khan commanded the forces to the east and was also in chief command of the siege operations. The siege was pressed with the utmost vigour and batteries were raised on the neighbouring mountain of Chambhar Tekadi, which commanded Satara fort. But the defence was no less vigorous than the attack. The commandant was Prayagji Anant Phanse, a native of Panvel, one of that Prabhu community whose members had already given to Shivaji such signal instances of loyalty and devotion. Prayagji was an old servant of the house of Bhosle. As far back as 1649 he was in the service of Shivaji. For many years he had been commandant both of Satara and Parali, and a relic of his rule is yet to be found in the neighbourhood. On the great hill which marks the eastern end of the Mahableshwar plateau he built in the middle of a bamboo wood a temple to the god Shiva and called it Yuvateshwar, or the god of the bamboo trees. The temple is still to be seen and both it and the mountain on which it stands are familiar to residents in Satara as Yeoteshwar. The fort, however, was only provisioned for two months and must have yielded from hunger, had the Marathas not found an ally by corrupting the emperor's son Azim Shah. Directly he had realized the emperor's design, Parashuram Trimbak had thrown himself into Parali, only six miles away. By means of large bribes he persuaded Azim Shah to let convoys of food and munitions pass from Parali into Satara. At the same time clouds of Maratha horse circled continuously round the besieging army. Unable to reduce Satara by famine and threatened with scarcity himself, Aurangzib tried to make a breach in the fortifications. From a radius of several miles he attracted labourers to his camp by offering them a gold coin for every basket of earth they removed. When two of the borings had reached a sufficient depth, they were filled with explosives. A large storming party was held in readiness and a

<sup>1</sup> Scott, *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar*.

number of guns trained on the fort to support their attack. In order to attract the garrison to the spot where the mines would explode, the emperor decked himself in his state robes and jewels and, accompanied by a splendid retinue, had himself carried on a portable throne below the north-east corner of the fort. The garrison, including the commandant Prayagji Phanse, thinking the procession to be some religious celebration, crowded to the edge. Instantly the first mine was fired. A vast mass of stone rose in the air, carrying with it two hundred of the garrison. Under cover of the smoke and confusion and the fire of their own batteries, the storming party climbed up the hill. When they were half way up, the second mine was fired and the emperor hoped that its explosion would open a farther breach for the attacking force. Unfortunately the mine exploded in the wrong direction. Quantities of great boulders rose in the air, but falling outwards showered on the heads of the unhappy Moghuls. The entire storming party was swept away. Some two thousand were buried under the falling stones. Hundreds of others were shot down by the garrison. Greatly cheered by this success, the garrison looked for their commandant. He had been sitting under a tree near the north-eastern bastion and had been blown up when the first mine exploded. By great good luck some rocks, as they fell, formed an arch over his body. He was able to call his men who, after considerable labour, dug him out unhurt. The loss of his storming party, as the Maratha chroniclers relate, so enraged the emperor that, losing his usual self-command, he ordered his elephants and all his transport cattle to be killed and their bodies piled up outside the walls as stepping stones by which his army might climb into the fort.<sup>1</sup> Asad Khan, however, persuaded him to countermand this ridiculous order and hinted that a better way would be to censure Azim Shah and make him stop his treacherous complaisance towards the enemy.

Aurangzib recovered his self-control and, sending for Azim Shah, reprimanded him so severely on the want of discipline that allowed convoys to pass through his lines that the prince saw that further treachery was impossible. He accordingly wrote to Parashuram Trimbak warning him that in future he would seize all supplies meant for the besieged. This warning was communicated by Parashuram Trimbak to Prayagji Phanse. No sooner had the commandant heard it than he received other and still more depressing information. This was the sudden death of the regent. After holding out for a week or two longer, Prayagji opened negotiations. On April 21, 1700, he surrendered the fort. Although provisioned for only two months, it had stood a siege of six. The gallantry of its defence had foiled the emperor's design of reducing in the dry season the Maratha forts and of attacking during the monsoon Rajaram's unprotected armies. Nevertheless, heartened by the news of the regent's death, which he proclaimed everywhere by beat of drum, Aurangzib at once moved against Parali. To soothe Azim Shah's feelings, hurt by the recent reprimand, and to stimulate him to more vigorous efforts in the

<sup>1</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar*.

coming siege, Aurangzib changed the name of Satara to Azim Tara, or Star of Azim Shah. He also announced that the whole credit of its fall was due to the tireless efforts of his gallant son. On the march to Parah the emperor boasted to his soldiers that now Rajaram was dead, his arms would soon overcome the regent's helpless widow and children.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE MARATHA COUNTER-OFFENSIVE

#### DEATH OF RAJARAM AND REGENCY OF TARABAI

A D 1700 TO 1706

As mentioned in the last chapter, Rajaram had taken with him a large force to attack Jalna. His march was at first successful. He plundered the city and then set it on fire. Entering the Godavari valley, he plundered Pauthan, Bhid and other towns along the river banks. Fearing to penetrate further east he turned back, meaning to deposit his plunder within the walls of Sinhgad. He had no sooner turned than he was surprised and defeated by Zulfikar Khan. That talented captain had, in a series of skilfully-fought actions, worsted repeatedly Dhanaji Jadav and had driven the Maratha troops out of south-eastern India. He then hastened north-west and inflicted on Rajaram's army, a severe reverse. The regent fell back with all speed, but he never shook off the Moghul pursuit. In this disastrous retreat the regent's resource and courage alone saved his army. Although half dead with fatigue, he fought for fifty miles a continuous series of rear-guard actions, and at last brought his command, reduced but not destroyed, to the welcome shelter of Sinhgad. Unhappily, the hardships and exposure aggravated a weakness of Rajaram's lungs contracted at Jinj. He at first seemed in good spirits at the fortunate end of his enterprise, and received modestly the congratulations of Ramchandra Bavdekar and the other ministers. But after some days high fever set in with frequent hemorrhages. Knowing that his end was near, he called to his bedside his ministers and, forgetful of his own sufferings, he commanded them not to relax their efforts in the war of liberation until King Shahu had been freed and the Moghuls driven from the land of the Marathas. He raised Ramchandra Bavdekar to the presidency of the council and bade the other ministers be guided by the old statesman's wisdom and experience. Then dismissing them, he composed his mind and met death with the firmness with which he had so often faced his enemies (March 5, 1700, *Falgun Wadya* 9, *Shake* 1621).

English historians have united in praising the placable temper, the regular life and the open-handed generosity of Rajaram. But he has been charged with complicity in the murder of Santaji Ghorpade. The only original authority that I have seen that fastens on Rajaram a share in that gallant soldier's death is Scott's *Deccan*. But the Musulman historian therein translated has explained that Santaji



ZULFIKAR KHAN



Ghorpade, according to the regent's information, entered into a treasonable plot against him. This was not unlikely in view of Santaji's previous conduct. Nor did the times allow of formal investigation. Thus at most it can be said that Rajaram, acting on evidence before him, ordered Santaji's execution. But there is no reason to suppose that this historian is correct. Khafi Khan, a far more reliable authority, has laid no blame on the regent. He has ascribed the general's murder to the enmity of Dhanaji Jadav and Nagoji Mane. This view derives support from the fact that these officers made a common cause with the Moghul, Firoz Jang, a course which Rajaram would certainly not have tolerated. It may be urged that the regent should at least have punished Dhanaji Jadav. Against a settled government this charge would have had some weight. But in times as difficult as those in which Rajaram ruled, it is impossible to expect perfect justice. Rajaram had just lost his best general. To have punished Dhanaji Jadav as he deserved would have involved the loss of the only other Maratha captain who had so far shown himself of outstanding ability, whose loyalty was beyond question and who was closely connected by ties of kinship with the royal house.

Rajaram's funeral ceremonies were performed by Jivaji Raje Bhosle. He was the direct descendant of Vithoji Bhosle, younger brother of Maloji Bhosle and Shivaji's great uncle. To keep alive the regent's memory, Ramchandra Bavdekar built on the edge of Sinhgad fortress a temple to Shiva. The temple was handsomely endowed with lands and money and may still be seen in undiminished splendour. Rajaram left two sons, Shivaji by Tarabai, Sambhaji by Rajasbai, and a daughter Soyarabai by Jankibai<sup>1</sup> his first wife, who had died in his early manhood. He left also a childless widow, Ambikabai, whose only daughter had died at Jinji. At the time of the regent's death, Tarabai, Rajasbai and their two sons were at Panhala. Ambikabai was at Vishalgad. Directly she heard the news of her husband's death, she declared her intention of burning herself as a *sati*. Several curious legends have centred round this brave lady's death. According to one tale, the commandant of Vishalgad laughed at her declaration and observed that it was but a sorry pretext for breaking through the restraints of the zenana. Ambikabai indignantly repudiated the charge and the gods supported her by striking blind the impious commandant. He humbly begged the queen's pardon and at her intercession Heaven restored the guilty wretch's sight. She then ordered a pyre to be prepared that she might burn herself alive. Her officers, however, urged that this was impossible. Rajaram had died three days before and his body had been already burnt. She should have burnt herself either with him or at any rate on the day of his death. She met this objection by pointing out that so far as she was concerned, it was the day of his death. She had only just heard of it. She then ordered wood for the pyre to be brought from Malkapur. Again her officers objected

<sup>1</sup> Jankibai was the daughter of Prataprao Gujar, Soyarabai married Balaji Nimbalkar.

that this would take several hours and the sun was low on the horizon. But confident in her powers as a *sati*, Ambikabai put a twig on the ground and forbade the shadows to pass over it, until she had fulfilled her vow. Obedient to her command, the sun stood still in its course until the wood from Malkapur had arrived and the pyre had been built. Then taking in her hands a favourite turban of her husband she entered the pyre and with unflinching courage burnt herself to ashes.

Tarabai, the chief queen of the dead regent, showed a different but no less ardent spirit. She summoned a council of state on behalf of her son Shivaji and demanded his recognition as king of the Marathas. Ramchandra Bavdekar protested that the true king was Shahu, on whose behalf Rajaram had ruled. Shivaji could not have inherited from his father a better title than his father had possessed. At the same time he readily agreed to serve under Tarabai as regent for King Shahu. But the high-spirited Tarabai impatiently brushed aside his objections and insisted that her son Shivaji should be crowned as king. 'He is the Shivaji,' she added, 'of whom the prophecy runs that he will conquer all India from Attock to Rameshwaram.' She had already won to her son's cause Parashuram Trimbak and Shankar Narayan, who appreciated the advantage of serving a present rather than an absent king, no matter how strong the latter's claim. Relying on their support, Tarabai reduced Timaji Raghunath from the office of *Pratimudhi* and gave it to Parashuram Trimbak, who had already held it for a short time in 1698. She reduced Shankar Malhar from the post of *Pant Sachiv* and gave it to Shankar Narayan Gandekar. The other ministers, overawed by her vigour, agreed to Shivaji's coronation. Early in 1701, the child was crowned with the customary splendour at Panhala and married to Bhawanibai, a daughter of the house of Ghatge. At the same time Tarabai threw her co-wife Rajasbai and her son Sambhaji into prison.

While this question of state was being settled, the emperor had taken Parali. It had been fortified and provisioned by Parashuram Trimbak and, according to the Maratha chroniclers, it received supernatural aid from the spirit of the dead saint, Ramdas. The vulgar belief had been that he was the re-incarnation of the monkey god Maruti, who had helped the divine Ramchandra in the conquest of Lanka. Sent by the dead saint, crowds of monkeys hastened to the defence of Parali<sup>1</sup> and hurled down rocks on the besieging Moghuls. Nor were they the only aid that the Marathas received from the animal kingdom. Clouds of wasps flew round the Moghul storming parties and maddened them with their stings. However this may be, an attempt by Fateh Ulla Khan, the general in command of the siege operations, to carry the place by escalade failed disastrously. The scaling ladders were destroyed<sup>2</sup> and three hundred picked troops perished. But it was no part of Parashuram's policy to sustain a lengthy siege. All he wished to do was to engage the imperial army until the rains fell, when the monsoon would, he knew,

<sup>1</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar*.

<sup>2</sup> Scott, *Deccan*.

cause it greater losses than any he and his garrison could inflict. He waited until the monsoon had burst. He then removed from Ramdas' temple the saint's images of Rama and Sita, sealed the saint's shrine and, skillfully evacuating Parali, fell back on Wasota, a great fortress in the Koyna valley (June 1700). The emperor garrisoned Parali and, pleased with its comparatively speedy fall, renamed it Nauroz Tara, or the Star of the New Day. His pleasure, however, was short-lived. The Urmodi, or Breast-breaker, river which runs past the foot of Parali came down with the violence which has given to it its name, and destroyed quantities of baggage and animals. But when the army reached the Kistna, a disaster<sup>1</sup> of the first magnitude occurred. So violent was the current that Aurangzib's rear-guard was completely cut off. Nine out of ten of those who tried to swim the Kistna were drowned. The remainder stayed on the further bank without food or shelter. They perished to a man. Aurangzib and the bulk of the army reached Wardhangad in safety. There the emperor, justly attributing the sufferings of his troops to the corruption and treachery of his son, Azim Shah, relieved him of his command and appointed him governor of Ujjain. When the rains had abated, the emperor led his army out of the hills and camped at Khawaspur<sup>2</sup> on the banks of the Man river. There he sent for reinforcements from Burhanpur, Bijapur, Hyderabad and Hindustan. But even at Khawaspur the unhappy Moghuls were not free from misfortune. The rainfall at Khawaspur is, as a rule, light. But, unluckily, in October 1700 the rains fell with unusual violence and the Moghul camp was inundated by the sudden rise of a torrent which passed close to it. Numbers of soldiers and of transport cattle perished and the emperor, who was in bed with a sore foot, was with some difficulty rescued.<sup>3</sup>

With senile obstinacy Aurangzib continued to besiege the Maratha fortresses. His next objective was Panhala. This fortress, as it will be remembered, had in spite of Ghatge's gallant defence been taken by the Moghuls and afterwards recovered by Parashuram Trimbak. The emperor once more laid siege to it. Dhanaji Jadav harassed in the usual Maratha way the besieging army. But Parashuram's tactics were now adopted by the commandants of all the forts. After a two months' siege, during which the garrison inflicted as much loss as they could on the investing army, they cut their way through it and on May 28, 1701, abandoned to the emperor the empty fortress. In the same year the emperor won the barren glory of retaking Chandan Wadan, near Satara. He met, however, a more vigorous resistance at Vishalgad. That stronghold, as has been related, had been taken by the Moghuls and afterwards betrayed by their commandant to the Marathas. In December 1701 Parashuram Trimbak threw himself into Vishalgad, determined, if possible, to retain it. Fateh Ulla Khan, who commanded the besiegers, began his operations by massacring the entire population between Panhala and Vishalgad, a distance of about forty miles.<sup>4</sup> The Moghuls began the siege with a resolution

<sup>1</sup> *Khafz Khan.*

<sup>2</sup> Scott, *Deccan.*

<sup>3</sup> Khawaspur is in the Sholapur district.

<sup>4</sup> Scott, *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 110 *et seq.*



that they had not shown since the sieges of Bijapur and Golconda. Not only earth, but camel-saddles, corpses of dead men and bodies of cattle were used to bring the siege works ever closer to the walls. Nevertheless for six months the garrison sustained with constancy all assaults. Then bribing Fateh Ullah Khan, Parashuram Trimbak left Vishalgad with his regular troops. On June 4, 1702, a few hillmen surrendered to the Moghul general<sup>1</sup>. After this success, bought by rivers of his soldiers' blood, Aurangzib rested his troops. When the monsoon had passed, he moved to Poona and sat down before Sinhgad. It fell in April 1703, after a siege of three and a half months. But its capitulation was only obtained by a present of money to the commandant, who led out his garrison with the honours of war. The rainy season of 1703 the emperor spent in Poona. In December of that year to February 1, 1704, he was engaged in the investment and capture of Rajgad. In March 1704, Torna fell by assault<sup>2</sup>.

Thus by 1704 the emperor had so far achieved his object that he had taken the chief Maratha strong places. But he was further than ever from the conquest of the Maratha people. He had boasted that he would soon crush his enemies now that the great king's house had dwindled to his two infant grandsons. But he was to learn that the death of Rajaram had in no way weakened the Maratha government. Tarabai had inherited the military talents and energy of her father Hambirrao Mohite. With the tireless vigour with which Hera strove to rouse against Priam the princes of Hellas, the Maratha queen flew from camp to camp and fortress to fortress. Living the life of a common trooper, exposed to the sun, sleeping on the ground, Tarabai was everywhere encouraging her officers, planning campaigns, organizing victories. Nor did the soldiers resent her interference. So clear was her vision, so unerring her judgment, that she was equally welcome on the battlefield and in the council chamber; and in no short time the Maratha counter-offensive, at first halting and ineffective, began to threaten the very heart of the Moghul empire. Nor could the invaded provinces offer any resistance. The emperor to reinforce his grand army had left behind only feeble garrisons and had disarmed the land-owners to prevent them rebelling against the garrisons. Finding nowhere any organized opposition, the Marathas ceased to be mere raiders. Everywhere that their armies penetrated they created permanent administrations for the collection of revenue. Everywhere could be found their agents, their *subhedars* and their *kamavisdars*. In the year 1705 two Maratha armies simultaneously crossed the Narbada. One led by Nemaji Sindia forced the Vindhya mountains and ravaged central India as far as Seronj, some fifty miles north of Bhopal. The other led by Khanderao Dabhade, turning aside from Surat and Broach threatened the whole of the wealthy viceroyalty of Gujerat. The Moghul government sent from Ahmadabad one Mahomed Beg Khan at the head of thirteen or

<sup>1</sup> Aurangzib renamed it Sakherlana.

<sup>2</sup> Scott, *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 110 *et seq.*

fourteen thousand regular horse and a levy of ten thousand *kols* or hillmen. But Mahomed Beg Khan was no match for the experienced Maratha commander. First Dabhade sent a few squadrons to meet Mahomed Beg's army. Mahomed Beg thought them to be the entire force with which he had to deal and attacked them with twenty thousand men. The Maratha troopers fled at their approach leaving as they fled some led horses, a few spears and umbrellas. Mahomed Beg Khan congratulated himself and his men on their easy victory and collected triumphantly the spoils of war. As the day grew warmer, the conquerors camped on the banks of the Narbada; they unsaddled their horses, laid aside their arms and were soon asleep, dreaming of their recent triumph. Suddenly eight thousand Maratha horse, whose spies had been watching the Moghul movements, burst on the unprepared enemy. A wild panic seized Mahomed Beg and his troops. The whole mass fled, hoping to put between them and the enemy the Narbada river. But a strong tide was sweeping up the estuary and men and horses were drowned by thousands. The remainder were cut down by the Marathas.<sup>1</sup> Before evening the Moghul army had ceased to exist and Gujerat as far north as Ahmadabad was plundered by Khanderao Dabhade.

These continual disasters broke the spirit of the imperial soldiery. Worn out by twenty years of war, they could only, if led by Zulfikar Khan, be made to face the Maratha horse. On the Moghul side were slackness, disorganization and dismay. On the Maratha side was the confidence born of repeated success. Indeed so great had become the contempt of the Marathas for the aged emperor, that to mock the Musulmans who every Friday offered up prayers in Aurangzib's name, the Maratha captains also ordered their own men every Friday to offer up prayers to heaven to prolong indefinitely the life of one who opposed them so feebly.<sup>2</sup> At last, on the representations of his officers, Aurangzib's youngest son, Kam Baksh, who not long before had been released from captivity, obtained his father's leave to open negotiations with Dhanaji Jadav.<sup>3</sup> As Rajaram had done, Jadav demanded as a preliminary condition the release of Shahu. The king was to be entrusted to Kam Baksh's care and led by him to the Maratha camp, where he would receive and confer with the Maratha leaders. Thereafter the latter would present themselves before Aurangzib and receive recognition of the right of the Maratha government and levy *chaauth* and *sardeshmukhi* over the southern provinces of the empire. No less than seventy invitations to Maratha officers had been written, when the emperor broke off negotiations. Taught by bitter experience, he mistrusted the good faith of his son and formed the belief that the negotiations were only a screen for his impending treachery. It was

<sup>1</sup> *Khafi Khan* Elliott and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 374

<sup>2</sup> Scott, *Deccan*.

<sup>3</sup> Khafi Khan writes that Dhanaji Jadav opened the negotiations. But Grant Duff is, I think, correct in stating that the offer must have come from the Moghuls.

the prince's intention to join with Shahu and the Marathas and with their aid to depose Aurangzib and usurp the throne of Delhi. The emperor dismissed the Maratha envoys, recalled his own, and leaving the Maratha country led his grand army to the siege of Wakinkera (1706).

After the fall of Bijapur, the Moghul generals reduced the fortresses owned by Sikandar Adil Shah. One of these, Sagar, between the confluence of the Bhima and the Kistna, was held by one Pem Naik,<sup>1</sup> the chief of a wild tribe called Berads, a name which the Musulman historians corrupted into Bedars, or Fearless Ones. On the approach of the Moghul army, Pem Naik at once submitted, and presenting himself at court, was raised to the rank of a commander of five thousand. But the savage chieftain soon pined for his own wild highlands and asked for and obtained leave to go to Wakinkera, a walled village fifteen miles from Sagar. On his death shortly afterwards, Piryā Naik, setting aside the claims of Pem Naik's son, also called Pem Naik, succeeded to the headship of the Berad tribe. He presented himself at court, was given a command of five thousand and did excellent service under Rohulla Khan at the siege of Raichur. After the fall of that place he withdrew to Wakinkera and, fortifying it, became a robber chief. He collected round him fourteen thousand infantry and four or five thousand horse. Allying himself to the Marathas, his attacks on the Moghul convoys prolonged without doubt the defence of Jinj. In vain the emperor sent against him a series of commanders. Some he successfully resisted, others he bribed. Aurangzib next sent against him his cousin Pem Naik, the lawful head of the Berads. But the wild tribesmen had no precise notion of the laws of succession and supported one whom they knew to be brave and fortunate. Piryā Naik drove away Pem Naik and cajoled the emperor with a present of seven lakhs. But neither threats nor danger checked the depredations of the Berad chief. While Aurangzib was besieging the Deccan forts, Piryā Naik seized a succession of convoys so valuable that the emperor, unable any longer to control his anger, abandoned in a fit of scumle spite his whole plan of campaign. Leaving the Deccan, he devoted his last days to the conquest of Wakinkera.<sup>2</sup>

No decision could better have pleased the Marathas. Tarabai at once commanded Dhanaji Jadav to do all he could to thwart the besiegers, while she directed her generals to retake the Deccan forts. Ramchandra Bavdekar, although he had spoken warmly against Tarabai's usurpation of the throne for her son Shivaji, never relaxed his efforts in the national cause. On the departure of the grand army, he bribed the Moghul commandants of Panhala and Pawangad and with their connivance retook the fortresses.<sup>3</sup> He then ordered Parashuram Trimbak to retake Satara and Parali. The duty of

<sup>1</sup> My account, taken from Khafi Khan, differs slightly from that of Grant Duff.

<sup>2</sup> The correct spelling is Wakinkheden, but I have adhered to the spelling sanctioned by long usage.

<sup>3</sup> Vithoji Kesarkar and Balaji Myle commanded the Maratha forces,

retaking Satara Parashuram Trimbak delegated to a Brahman named Anaji. Anaji had been at one time a clerk attached to a company of Mawal infantry and he justified his superior's choice. He dressed himself in the garb of an anchorite and, by performing a series of severe penances<sup>1</sup> outside the fort gates but in the sight of the garrison, led the Hindu sepoys to admit him. Inside the fort he made no attempt to hide, but built himself a straw shed, wherein he lived on so harsh a diet that he convinced the Moghul commandant that he was indifferent to the things of this world and cared only for his own future in the next. With careless contempt the Moghul let the anchorite roam as he would. By money and eloquence Anaji artfully corrupted the Hindu soldiers among the garrison. At the same time he kept in constant touch with Parashuram Trimbak, until one night the latter at the head of a storming party took Satara by escalade and put the garrison to the sword. A few days later Parashuram Trimbak took Parali by escalade. This was the signal for a great religious rejoicing. Ramdas' images of Rama and Sita were brought back in triumph from Wasota and Ramdas' own shrine was opened and purified.

About the same time as Satara and Parali were retaken, Shankar Narayan Gandekar retook Sinhgad, Rajgad and Torna. Having thus robbed Aurangzib of the fruits of his recent campaign, the Maratha captains concentrated their divisions in the neighbourhood of Wakinkera. Piryā Naik had made a gallant defence and from guns of every calibre had fired cannon-balls and showered rockets on the Moghul lines. Nevertheless the emperor pressed the siege with vigour and seemed on the point of taking Wakinkera, when he was compelled to meet a general attack by Dhanaji Jadav at the head of largely increased forces. Dhanaji Jadav and several other Maratha leaders had in 1703 entrusted their wives to Piryā Naik's keeping. They now formed a bold scheme for their rescue. The Maratha army pressed home a vigorous attack on the besiegers and were with difficulty beaten off. During the battle a body of three thousand horse cut their way through the investing lines and into the fort. There they mounted the generals' wives on spare horses and once more cut their way out. In spite of this success the emperor's progress continued, so the Berad chief had recourse to a ruse. His brother Som Shankar<sup>2</sup> presented himself at the Moghul headquarters and asked forgiveness for Piryā Naik and a week's truce. His erring brother, so Som Shankar said, had gone mad and jumped from the fort walls. If nothing was heard of him at the end of a week he, Som Shankar, would surrender. The week passed and a small force under Muhtasham Khan entered Wakinkera to take possession of it in the emperor's name. But the shrieks and screams of Piryā's mother for her missing son so distressed the new commandant that for several days he did not disturb her possession. At last he insisted that she should hand over the citadel. The old lady with streaming eyes consented, but prayed that Som Shankar should be sent back from

<sup>1</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar.*

<sup>2</sup> *Khafi Khan,*

the Moghul lines, as he alone knew where his brother had buried treasures. Her prayer was granted and Som Shankar returned sooner had he done so than Pirya Naik emerged from hiding, se Muhtasham Khan and the men with him and once more closed gates in the face of the enemy. The delay gained by the arts Pirya, Som Shankar and their mother had enabled fresh bodies Marathas to join Dhanaji Jadav; so Aurangzib ordered Zulfikar K to hasten to him with all available reinforcements. The arrival this talented commander restored confidence in the investing army once again the siege progressed. Zulfikar Khan skilfully seized wells on which the garrison depended, and following up this success he pushed his trenches so near the main works of the fortress that the emperor fixed the following day for a general assault. Pirya Naik realized that Wakinkera was no longer tenable. He left the thousand picked troops with orders to defend the walls to the last. With the rest of his army he left the fortress by a number of secret tunnels which he had dug for such an emergency and joined Dhanaji Jadav. When Zulfikar Khan next day made his way into Wakinkera over the bodies of Pirya Naik's rearguard, he found an empty fortress (April 27, 1705). The guns had been destroyed, the provisions burnt and everything of value taken away by the fleeing garrison. The emperor affected to be pleased by the fall of Wakinkera and renamed it Rahman Baksh, or the Gift of the Merciful One. But the escape of Pirya Naik, following as it did the loss of Satara, Parali, Rajgaon, Sinhgad, Torna and Panhala, for the capture of which he had sacrificed his grand army, preyed on his mind. He fell seriously ill and for ten or twelve days his life was despaired of. He recovered, but he knew himself a beaten man. He had but one desire and that was to withdraw safely his army and himself from the country which he no longer hoped to conquer (December 1706).

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE MARATHA COUNTER-OFFENSIVE RETREAT AND DEATH OF THE EMPEROR RELEASE AND CORONATION OF SHAHU

A.D. 1706 TO 1708

AURANGZIB had recourse to two devices in the hope of securing unmolested retreat. First he sent Zulfikar Khan to besiege Sinhgad and thus create in the minds of the Marathas the belief that he still intended to reduce their fortresses. Next he made Shahu write to various Maratha leaders and call on them to submit. These letters, the emperor hoped, would create such divisions among his enemies as would enable him to escape from their assaults. Neither device was successful. Zulfikar Khan with his usual skill retook Sinhgad but had then to try and rejoin the emperor, thus betraying the latter's plan; and directly Zulfikar Khan left the neighbourhood, Shahu

Narayan once more scaled Sinhgad.<sup>1</sup> Shahu's letters, written as they were at the dictation of Aurangzib, were very properly disregarded. Seeing that the grand army was about to fall back, the Marathas strained every nerve to destroy it before it reached a place of safety. Hamid-ud-din Khan was in charge of the Moghul rearguard. But so anxious was he to save himself, that he gave the post of danger to younger and untried officers. Between Bahadurpur and Ahmadnagar, which the retreating army was struggling to reach, Dhanaji Jadav with a great Maratha force fell upon the rearguard. It was entirely destroyed or dispersed, its commanders were killed or held to ransom and the emperor's own baggage train was taken. Indeed, had Dhanaji Jadav pressed his success he could have captured Aurangzib himself. But when the Marathas had cut their way to the emperor's bodyguards, the near presence and pomp of majesty so overawed them, that they did not dare advance. To this circumstance alone Aurangzib owed his escape from their arms.

At last the walls of the great fort built by Ahmad Nizam Shah offered a kindly refuge to the war-worn autocrat. Twenty-one years before he had camped there, confident that in a few months' time he would, like Ala-ud-din, have added all southern India to his dominion. He reached it now in January 1707, bankrupt in hopes and power, his army shattered, his treasury empty, conscious that his sons were but waiting for his death to begin anew the struggle for the Delhi throne. All around him were Maratha armies led by Dhanaji Jadav, Nemaaji Sindia and Udaaji Pawar, and for a time it seemed that even Ahmadnagar could not long protect him. Happily for Aurangzib, he had with him Iklas Khan, the son of that Sheikh Nizam Hyderabad who had shared with his father the credit of Sambhaji's capture. Iklas Khan, who had been honoured by the title of Khan Alam, or Lord of the Known World, reorganized the troops, dismissed such officers as had particularly disgraced themselves and inspired in the cowering fragments of the grand army some of his own courage. Early in February 1707 he led a Moghul force out of the shelter of Ahmadnagar and inflicted a severe reverse on Dhanaji Jadav. The respite thus gained enabled Zulfikar Khan to effect a junction with Aurangzib. The arrival of this able soldier restored for a time, at any rate, the Moghul fortunes. He was at once put in chief command and Iklas Khan sent to guard central India. Zulfikar Khan stored his baggage in Ahmadnagar fort and organized a strong flying column. With it he pursued Dhanaji Jadav, and driving him first across the Bhima and then across the Krishna, encamped at Miraj.

But a more powerful foe than any Maratha leader had risen up against Aurangzib. About February 15, 1707, the emperor was attacked by fever. He aggravated his illness by unceasing prayers; and although he showed himself daily to his officers they could see on his countenance the stamp of death. Hamid-ud-din Khan, who, in spite of his recent cowardice in the field, really loved his master,

<sup>1</sup> Scott, *Deccan*.

sought counsel of some Hindu astrologers. They, after the manner of their kind, prescribed that Aurangzib should give in charity a rich jewel and a royal elephant. The emperor contemptuously wrote on the back of the prescription that to give away an elephant was not the custom of a good Musulman, but the accursed practice of Hindus and star-worshippers<sup>1</sup>. Then he sent a letter with four thousand rupees to the chief *kazi* of Ahmadnagar and asked that they should be distributed among the deserving poor. He ended the letter with a Persian couplet, which being interpreted ran as follows :

Carry this creature of dust quickly to the first burial place  
And consign him to the earth without any useless coffin

He did not, however, pass away until March 3, and his last days were embittered by the quarrels of his sons. Mahomed Akbar and Sultan Mahomed were dead. The three survivors were inflamed by mutual enmity. Shah Alam, the eldest, had been released some years before and was governor of the Punjab. Azim Shah was governor of Ahmadabad. Kam Baksh was with the emperor. Of these the most ambitious and self-confident was Azim Shah. Hearing of his father's failing health, he begged leave to visit him, pleading that the air of Ahmadabad did not suit him. The emperor had, when about to rebel against Shah Jehan, written in the same strain and he fancied that Azim Shah meant to follow his example. He wrote back refusing Azim Shah leave, adding sardonically that all airs (*hava*) suited a man's health except the airs (*hava*) of ambition. Azim Shah, undaunted by this rebuff, persisted in his petitions and at last obtained leave. He reached Ahmadnagar a few days before the emperor's death and at once picked a quarrel with Kam Baksh, his father's youngest and favourite son. At last Aurangzib to separate them sent Kam Baksh to Bijapur and appointed Azim Shah to be governor of central India. Nevertheless he knew that after they had left, their partisans were intriguing, scheming, canvassing among the soldiers to secure the succession. In despair the emperor drew up a will, by which he divided his empire between his sons and entrusted it to Hamid-ud-din Khan. On the morning of March 3, 1707, Aurangzib rose as usual and said, as strictly as ever, his morning prayer. An hour later he was dead. He had reigned for forty-nine years and was in his eighty-ninth year.

It is difficult, if not impossible, for a historian of the Maratha people to do justice to Aurangzib. His conduct towards Shivaji and Sambhaji was treacherous and cruel. His every relation with the kings of Bijapur and Golconda was stained with inhumanity and perfidy. His kindness towards Shahu was prompted by political rather than charitable motives. Still it must be conceded that of all the Delhi emperors the memory of Aurangzib is dearest to Indian Musulmans. If to Hindus he was cruel and intolerant, to the orthodox<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Khafi Khan*

<sup>2</sup> Aurangzib treated the kings of Bijapur and Golconda badly because they were Shi'as.

followers of Islam he was gracious and indulgent. Yet his excessive partiality to Musulmans convicts the emperor of folly. The Moghul throne was guarded by the swords of the Rajput clans. Conquered and conciliated by Akbar, honoured alike by Jahangir and Shah Jehan, the chiefs of Rajasthan had during their three reigns been the bulwark of the house of Timur. The soul of chivalry, they had poured out like water in the service of the empire the best blood of their kingdoms. It was not until they had suffered a succession of insults from the bigoted Aurangzib that their hearts turned against him. In his youth Aurangzib had rebelled and imprisoned an indulgent father and murdered two of his brothers. The crimes of his youth bore bitter fruit. Through his long life he was haunted by the fear that his sons would behave to him as he had behaved towards Shah Jehan; and his great campaign in the south was several times frustrated by the treasons of his family. In considering the character of Aurangzib, it is impossible not to recall another great emperor, who nearly seventeen hundred years before ended his days in the little island of Capri. Nature had bestowed on Tiberius a commanding presence, a penetrating mind, the power to lead armies and to rule senates. Humiliated by his adopted father, betrayed by his wife, his daughter-in-law and his dearest friend, he grew into a tyrant, evil and suspicious. Yet had the murderer of Agrippina and Drusus lived during the wars against Carthage, he might well have emulated his kinsman and namesake who on the banks of the Metaurus saved the fortunes of Italy. Had Aurangzib not been born in the purple, his courage, his military talents, his frugal and virtuous life would assuredly have won him high distinction; and the murderer of Dara Shukoh and Sultan Morad might well have left a respected name, as one of the bravest and most fortunate of the Moghul commanders.

No sooner had the news of their father's death reached the ears of the rival princes, than they all prepared for war. Shah Alam, the eldest, was at Peshawar and at once started for the capital. Nearer than his brothers, he reached Delhi first and, making himself master of what remained of the Moghul treasure, he proclaimed himself emperor. Azim Shah, who had at first returned to Ahmadnagar, marched to oppose him with the Malwa troops and the remains of the grand army. At Zulfikar Khan's advice, he released Shahu, so that the Marathas, involved in their own disputes, might not molest him. Shah Alam, whose kindly nature abhorred the fratricidal strife, offered Azim Shah for a kingdom the provinces of the Deccan and Gujerat. But the younger brother contemptuously refused the offer, observing that for the son of a Moghul emperor there was no choice save between a coffin and a throne.<sup>1</sup> The contending armies met at Jaju, fifteen miles from Agra. Azim Shah was defeated. Refusing to surrender, he died on the battlefield. After the death of his more serious rival, Shah Alam offered to confirm Kam Baksh in his governorship of Bijapur and Golconda. But the Moghul prince thought that to refuse battle would stain the honour of a descendant

<sup>1</sup> *Takht ya takhta*, was the Persian saying.



of Timur. Zulfikar Khan who, after Azim Shah's defeat, had been pardoned and promoted by the kindly Shah Alam, was sent with an army against Kam Baksh. The general and the prince had been inflamed by mutual enmity since the siege of Jinji, and Zulfikar Khan fell upon Kam Baksh, his talents whetted by the fury of his hatred. The result of the battle was never in doubt. Kam Baksh's army was destroyed and the prince wounded and taken. Shah Alam tried to console his brother, but the proud youth could not endure his misfortunes and he died a day or two after the downfall of his hopes. He was buried near the tomb of his ancestor Humayun. After the death and defeat of his two brothers Shah Alam, under the title of Bahadur Shah, became emperor of Delhi in February 1708. The quarrels of the dead emperor's sons had given Tarabai a chance of increasing the Maratha conquests. Porus and Chakan were at this time held for the Moghuls by an officer named Lodi Khan. Him Dhanaji Jadav attacked and defeated and Tarabai began to weave further schemes for the extension of her son's dominion. These schemes were frustrated by the release of Shahu. As a condition of his release he had agreed to rule as a feudatory of Azim Shah and to leave behind him as hostages his surviving wife, his mistress Virubai, a pretty slave girl whom Aurangzib had given him at the time of his marriage, his mother Yesubai and his illegitimate half-brother Madansing. On the other hand Azim Shah had granted Shahu the *sardeshmukhi* and the *chauth* over the six Deccan *subhas*.<sup>1</sup> Shahu was also appointed governor of Gondwana, Gujerat and Tanjore during good behaviour.

For Shahu's escort Azim Shah detached a few Rangad<sup>2</sup> troopers. His personal attendant Jyotaji Kesarkar, the patil or headman of Punal near Panhala, went with Yesubai to Delhi, in order that he might get the *sanad* from the hands of the emperor. Events, however, had turned out contrary to Azim Shah's hopes and by the time Jyotaji Kesarkar reached the capital, Shah Alam was emperor. A quarrel now arose between Zulfikar Khan and Munim Khan, the vizier, as to whether the new emperor should recognize Shahu or Tarabai's son Shivaji. At last Zulfikar Khan contrived the recognition of Shahu. Zulfikar Khan was *subhedar* or viceroy of the Deccan and he had appointed Daud Khan, the captor of Jinji, as his deputy. Zulfikar Khan made Daud Khan agree to grant the claims of Shahu to the *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* over the six *subhas* of the Deccan, provided they were collected and paid by Daud Khan's own lieutenants.

Shahu's return was not greeted by the rejoicings that had welcomed the return of Shivaji or indeed of Rajaram. Shahu's situation resembled that of Herod Agrippa. Both princes had been brought up in a foreign capital and had all but wholly lost touch

<sup>1</sup> The six *subhas* of the Deccan were Khandesh, Berar, Aurangabad, Bedar, Hyderabad or Golconda and Bijapur. The two last became greatly enlarged by conquests. The southern provinces overrun by the Moghul armies were divided between these two *subhas* and were called respectively the Hyderabad and Bijapur Carnatic.

<sup>2</sup> Rangads are Rajput converts to Islam.

with their own countrymen. But Shahu's case was even worse than Herod's, for Tarabai had in his absence usurped his throne for her own son Shivaji. Indeed, had the latter been a boy of ordinary understanding, it is probable that Shahu would never have regained his throne. Rajaram had indeed chivalrously styled himself Shahu's deputy. But for political purposes he had assumed the royal insignia and the Maratha people had all regarded him as their king. They therefore deemed the succession of his son Shivaji as the natural descent of the crown. But Shivaji was an idiot and Rajasbai, Tarabai's co-wife, was sedulously pushing the claims of her son Sambhaji. Many, therefore, of the Maratha nobles were ready to support Shahu to avert a civil war between Rajaram's widows. Tarabai, however, proclaimed that Shahu was an impostor and that Sambhaji's son had died many years before. Not to lose a weapon against the Marathas, Aurangzib had substituted for the dead prince another boy of the same age. Tarabai's proclamation was not inherently improbable, since Aurangzib had adopted this very course when, on Jaswant Singh's death, his two sons had escaped from Delhi to Udaipur. Tarabai commanded her officers to swear on milk and boiled rice fidelity to her son against all claimants. Three only obeyed. They were Parashuram Trimbak who owed to her the office of *Pratimdh*, Ramchandra Bavdekar, who had been won over entirely to Tarabai's cause, and Shankar Narayan whose reverence for Ramchandra Bavdekar impelled him to adopt the views of his former master, whatever they were. The others would only swear fidelity to Shivaji, provided Shahu proved to be an impostor. Thus the question really narrowed itself to this—was Shahu Sambhaji's son or not?

As Shahu rode through the mountain passes to Burhanpur, he for the first time learnt of Tarabai's designs. In a hilly tract, not far from Burhanpur, lived a zamindar, Sajjansing by name. From him Shahu begged arms and men, and indeed he needed them for his only troops were his escort of fifty Rangad horse. Sajjansing promised Shahu his support. Encouraged by the zamindar's adhesion, Shahu sent letters to the chief Maratha leaders appealing to their loyalty. The first to join him was Parsoji Bhosle. The next was a robber baron named Amritrao Kadam Bande, who had a castle at Kokarmanda on the banks of the Tapti. The third was Chimnaji Damodar Moghe in command of the Maratha troops in south Khandesh. A movement of this kind is infectious. Haibatrao Nimbalkar and Nemaji Sindia, the two Maratha officers in Baglan and northern Nasik, followed the lead of Parsoji Bhosle. Shahu now felt sufficiently strong to send to Tarabai a letter announcing his arrival and demanding his throne. He then halted at Ahmadnagar, where according to the Musulman historian<sup>1</sup> he visited the spot where Aurangzib, for whom he had always cherished kindly feelings, had died and where his heart is still buried. From Ahmadnagar Shahu went to a little township called Parad.<sup>2</sup> The headman, a Maratha

<sup>1</sup> *Khafi Khan.*

<sup>2</sup> *Shedgavkar Bakhar.*

named Lokhande held the village in the Moghul interest. He closed the gates, fired on Shahu's outposts and shot dead the royal messenger who called on him as a royal subject to open the town. Shahu decided to make an example of the truculent peasants. He sent for his artillery and battered a breach in the walls. As he was about to order the assault, the headman's daughter-in-law rushed out of the village and put her baby at the king's feet and begged him to spare it. The king greeted the young woman kindly and had her taken to a place of safety. He then ordered the attack. The troops poured through the breach and put to the sword Lokhande and most of the villagers. Gratified with this success, the king on his return to camp adopted the Lokhande baby as his own, gave him the surname of Bhosle and called him Fatehsing, or 'the Lion of Victory'. He gave him also the fief of Akalkot which Aurangzib had given<sup>1</sup> to Shahu as a wedding present, when he married him to Ambikabai, the daughter of Jadav of Sindkhed, and to Savitrabai, the daughter of Sindia of Kanherkhed. The baby grew to be a man, and became the ancestor of the well-known rajas of Akalkot.

From Parad Shahu marched to Khed, a town in the Poona district on the Bhima river. There he met the large army which Tarabai had sent against him under the leadership of Dhanaji Jadav and Mansing More. With them, better to serve her interests, she had sent Khando Ballal Chitnis. Shahu was unwilling to risk a battle against so redoubtable a captain as Dhanaji Jadav, so he resorted to other means. Taking with him his personal attendant Jyotaji Kesarkar, who had overtaken him at Burhanpur, he mounted his elephant and went boldly towards the enemy's lines until he could distinguish Dhanaji Jadav and Mansing More. He then called on them to join their lawful master. Their allegiance to Tarabai had already been shaken by Shahu's letters. His resolute action now convinced them that the prince was no impostor. They went over with their troops to Shahu and by their desertion enabled Shahu to defeat and disperse Tarabai's forces. After the victory Shahu marched through Chakan, Poona and Jejuri, and laid siege to Chandan Wandan, a great double fortress visible from Satara town. It surrendered after a short siege. Parashuram Trimbak with the remains of the Khed army threw himself into Satara fort and refused to admit that Shahu was King Sambaji's son. Unwilling to press matters against his aunt, Shahu engaged in a desultory siege of the place. He was moved to more vigorous action by the unsolicited advice of an old Maratha woman. One day he had gone hunting and, overtaken by darkness, he took shelter in a village called Banavadi.<sup>2</sup> The *patil's* wife, an aged lady, offered him for supper some boiled rice. Shahu with a hunter's appetite hastily took a mouthful and burnt himself. His hostess, ignorant of her guest's identity observed, 'You are behaving like King Shahu. Instead of reducing the countryside he wastes his

<sup>1</sup> Aurangzib at the same time gave Shahu Indapur and the swords of Shivaji and Afzul Khan taken at Raygad.

<sup>2</sup> *Shedgavkar Bakhar*.

time, trying to take the capital. In the same way you, instead of taking the rice at the edge of your plate, where it is cool, take it from the middle where it is still too hot to eat.' Next day Shahu returned to his army and followed the old lady's excellent advice. Leaving an investing force round Satara fort, he reduced the Kistna and Yenna valleys and then returned to crush Parashuram's resistance. The commandant of Satara fort was a Musulman named Sheikh Mira, whose wife and children were at Wai. Shahu had them arrested and brought below the walls of Satara. There he tied them to guns, threatening to blow them to pieces unless Sheikh Mira surrendered. The threat proved too much for the commandant. He seized Parashuram Trimbak, and handed over to Shahu the fortress of Satara. The king entered the great stronghold in state and flung Parashuram Trimbak into a dungeon. Sheikh Mira was deeply concerned about the fate of Parashuram Trimbak, whom he warmly liked and respected. Before surrendering Satara, he had made the king promise to give him in return for the fortress anything he asked for. When Shahu had secured it he asked Sheikh Mira to name his reward. Sheikh Mira threw himself at the royal feet and begged him to release Parashuram and make him his *Pratimdhū*. The king, unwilling to break his word, sent for Parashuram and offered to confirm him in his post. The latter felt deeply grateful to Sheikh Mira, but he would not abandon Tarabai. The king sent him back to prison, but to honour him had his iron fetters changed to silver ones. Shortly after Satara, Parahi and Mahimangad surrendered to Shahu.

The prince had wished to make Ahmadnagar his capital, but Zulfikar Khan would not permit its occupation by the Marathas. Shahu, therefore, selected Satara, which since Rajaram's time had been the Maratha headquarters. Now master of it, he thought the time favourable for his coronation. In January 1708<sup>1</sup> he ascended the throne with all the ceremonial adopted by Shivaji. Since Parashuram Trimbak would not desert Tarabai, Shahu gave the post of *Pratimdhū* to Gadadhar Pralhad. He gave the post of Peshwa to Bahirao Pingle, the son of Moro Pingle.<sup>2</sup> He gave to Hanmante the office of *Pant Amatya*, held by Ramchandra Nilkanth who, after a quarrel with Tarabai, was now more devoted to her than ever. The queen had been greatly disturbed by Shahu's success at Parad. She vented her ill-temper so violently on Ramchandra Nilkanth that in his wrath he sent a friendly message to the young king. This came to the knowledge of the queen. She promptly put Ramchandra in silver chains and threw him into a dungeon. On hearing of Dhanaji Jadav's desertion and of the fall of Satara she grew desperate. She opened the door of Ramchandra Nilkanth's prison and had him escorted with

<sup>1</sup> The date of Shahu's coronation has been settled by a letter quoted by Mr. Sardesai. The capture of Satara has always been regarded by Shahu's successors as the most important event in his reign. It was taken on a Saturday and it was always the custom of the maharajas of Satara—now it is the custom of their descendants, the *sardars* of Satara—to sound drums on Saturday in honour of the event. Sheikh Mira was the ancestor of the present *sardar* of Wai.

<sup>2</sup> Nilo Pingle, Bahiro's elder brother, remained with Tarabai.

great honour into her presence. On his arrival she placed in his lap her son Shivaji and her stepson Sambhaji<sup>1</sup> and, imploring him to protect them, made him her chief minister. From that time on Ramchandra Nilkanth remained her loyal servant. The king left vacant the post of *Pant Sachiv*, held by Shankar Narayan, who stood by Tarabai. The office of commander-in-chief he gave to Dhanaji Jadav.

Having thus settled his government, Shahu resolved to visit Parali in person and win to his cause the powerful spiritual aid of Ramdas' followers. The saint on his death had resigned the management of Ramchandra's temple to his female disciple Akka. She received Shahu and acknowledged him as Sambhaji's son. She next begged that he would free her in her old age from the arduous task assigned to her and give it to Gangadhar Swami, the grandson of Ramdas' elder brother Shreshta<sup>2</sup>. The king agreed and sent a palankeen with an escort to fetch Gangadhar. In due course Gangadhar came and, while waiting for leave to visit the king, put up in a house on the banks of the Kistna a few miles away. The king, hearing of this, went to see him, but found him in a deep religious trance. Shahu waited patiently until Gangadhar recovered consciousness. He then bowed in front of Ramdas' kinsman and invited him to go with him to Satara, where for four or five days he entertained the Swami in splendid state. The king thus strove to propitiate orthodox Hindu opinion and to gain over those who had been alienated from him by his long residence at the Moghul court and by his recent pilgrimage to the tomb of the dead emperor.

## CHAPTER XXV<sup>2</sup>

### SOCIAL CUSTOMS OF THE HIGH CASTES IN MAHARASHTRA

THE present stage in our history is, as it seems to me, a suitable one in which to examine for a moment the customs and observances of the people whose story I am relating. The English reader will greatly err if he thinks that they in any way resemble those of western Europe. The Hindu's life is bound up in an intricate ceremonial quite foreign to the experience of Englishmen. Indeed in his mode of life, in his demeanour, in his mental outlook, when unaffected by contact with Europeans, the Hindu far more resembles the Hellene or Roman of classical times than the westerner of to-day. Nor is this extraordinary. Hinduism is the eldest of three great sister Aryan civilizations. The younger sisters were Hellenism and Mazdaism. In the first century before Christ, Hellenism was mistress

<sup>1</sup> This was his title just as Ramdas' was Samarth. Shreshta's real name was Gangadhar like his grandson's.

<sup>2</sup> This chapter is largely based on Campbell, *Bombay Presidency Gazetteer*, Vol. XVIII, pp. 112-54.

of the Mediterranean and the Euxine, and from Marseilles to Trebizond the populations worshipped the gods of Attica. In Iran flourished still the worship of the great Ahura Mazda, whose ears had once heard the prayers of Cyrus the king, the Achaemenian. In India Hinduism had reigned supreme for at least ten centuries. But if we pass over six hundred years, what do we find? Hellenism has vanished completely. She has given place to Christianity, an offshoot of Judaism. If we pass over yet another six hundred years, we find that a second offshoot of Judaism, Islam, has swept away Mazdaism. But the onslaughts of both these Semitic faiths were successfully resisted by the eldest of the three sisters, Hinduism. Nor does she show at the present hour any signs of senile decay. She still lives in the full vigour of her eternal youth, and her acolytes number at least three hundred millions. It has thus happened that while the European has in the last two thousand years changed entirely, the Hindu of to-day worships the same gods, observes the same ritual, leads the same home-life, as he did when Pericles invoked Pallas at Athens or when Mars and Jupiter received at Rome the sacrifices of Æmilius and Scipio.

Now in all India there are probably no more orthodox Hindus than the Maratha people, and the Hinduism which they profess is of the most austere and puritan type. The extravagances which find a place in the religion of some other Indian nations are looked on with disfavour by the sober, simple-minded dwellers in the Deccan. In this chapter I shall try to give my English readers a more vivid idea of their private lives by sketching, as briefly as I can, some of the family observances of the high caste Hindus of Maharashtra.

For her first connement the young Brahman wife generally goes to her father's house. As soon as her baby boy is born, he is laid in a winnowing fan. Mother and child are bathed in hot water, a fire is lit in the room, myrrh is burnt and an iron bar laid across the threshold. When the father hears of his son's birth he hastens to his father-in-law's house to perform the *jatkarma*, or birth-ceremony. Before he begins it, he bathes carefully, dons a rich silk waistcloth, pours a ladle full of water on the ground, saying, 'I throw this water to cleanse the child from the impurity of its mother's body.' The mother then brings the child in her arms and sits on a stool close to her husband. The father takes a gold ring, passes it through some honey and clarified butter and lets a drop fall into the child's mouth. He touches the child's shoulders with his right hand and presses the ring in his left hand against both its ears. He recites some holy verses and smells the child's head three times. The father with the ring in his right hand sprinkles water on his wife's right breast. She may then begin to suckle her child. A present of money to priests ends the birth-ceremony.

The child, if a boy, is given its name on the twelfth day after its birth. First its ears are bored for earrings. Then the family astrologer draws the child's horoscope and indicates four names. Three of these he selects himself. The fourth the parents choose. The father then reads the four names aloud that all may hear. The

astrologer reads out the horoscope and calls a blessing on the child's head, saying, 'May the child live to a good old age.' When the boy is a month old, the mother shows him to the sun and prays to the sun-god to guard him. The parents then walk to the village temple, give the god a packet of betel-nut and a coco-nut and beg the sun-god to be kind to their boy. When the family party return home, the father worships the earth, the moon and sun, the gods Shiva and Vishnu and the eight directions. A carpet is spread, on it are placed some carpenter's tools, some pieces of cloth, a pen, an inkpot and paper and some jewellery. The boy is laid on his face near them. The first of these articles that he clutches is supposed to indicate the calling for which he is most suited.

The boy's birthday is a festival both east and west. But it is celebrated in the Deccan by observances unknown in Europe. In the morning a square is traced in the women's hall. Three low wooden stools are set in the square, two in a line and a third in front of them. On the front stool are piled eighteen little rice heaps and on each heap a betel-nut. One of the betel-nuts is the family deity, two represent the boy's parents, the others stand for various heroes and gods of the two great epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. On the two stools sit the father and the mother with the boy on her lap, and a married woman marks the child's brow with red powder. All then bow to the house gods and the elders of the family, and the deities are asked to give the child a long life. The boy drinks from a silver cup some milk mixed with molasses and sesamum and then he is free to enjoy his birthday as only healthy little boys can.

The *munj*, or thread-girding ceremony, corresponds in some measure with the Christian confirmation. By the one the high caste man is admitted to the caste. By the other a Christian becomes a fully responsible member of the Christian community. The thread-girding ceremony is very elaborate indeed and a detailed account of it would be both too long and too tedious. I shall mention only a few of the more important incidents. When the little boy is between seven and ten, a day for the great occasion has to be fixed by the astrologer in one of the months when the sun is going northwards, i.e. January to June. This settled, a band is hired, a porch built in front of the house and invitations sent to relatives living at a distance. Other relations, the house gods, the village gods, caste men and friends in the neighbourhood are invited orally. On the morning of the thread-girding ceremony twelve low wooden stools are set in a row and twelve unmarried thread-wearing Brahman lads take their seats on the stools. Dinner is served and for the last time the boy dines with his mother. After a variety of most complicated rites, the boy tells his father that he wishes to become a Brahman and be told the sacred verse. He nestles close to his father and the priests cover them with a shawl. That no one else, high caste or low caste, man or woman may hear the verse, everyone present goes to a little distance. The father three times whispers the sacred verse into his son's right ear and the boy repeats it after his father. The shawl is then removed, the priests invoke blessings on the boy's head

and the sacred thread is tied with three knots round his waist. A staff is put in his hand and his father addresses his son. 'Till now you have been a Sudra (low caste), now you are a Brahman and a *brahmachari* (Brahman student)' The boy is now supposed to become a begging Brahman. That evening he goes to the village temple, worships the village god and on his return begs alms from his mother and other close relations. For ten or twelve days he learns the *sandhyas*, or daily prayers, worships the *tulasi* plant, or holy basil, and then rejoins his family. A number of intricate ceremonies follow. On their completion, the family priest flings a waistcloth over his shoulders, bids him never bathe in the evening, never look at naked women, never commit adultery, never run, never climb trees, never go into a well, never swim in a river. 'Up to this time,' the priest continues, 'you have been a *brahmachari*, now you are a *snatak*, or householder.'

This point reached, the boy starts out as if to go on a journey. His maternal uncle or some other near relation feigns surprise and asks him where he is going. He replies, 'To Benares', in other words he proposes to become a religious anchorite on the banks of the holy Ganges. The boy's relations crowd round him and beg him not to go, promising to find him a wife. He consents to put off his pilgrimage, goes back to his house and the thread-girding ceremony ends with a feast.<sup>1</sup>

The family have now to keep their promise and find the lad a wife. Negotiations are opened with the parents of a girl of a suitable age and rank. A good deal of haggling ensues and the negotiations often fall through. If they are successful, the family astrologer is called in to fix a lucky day. The marriage ceremonies extend over a long period, but I shall at once come to the day before the wedding. In the evening the boy dresses himself in a new turban and shawl given him by his betrothed's relatives and his sister ties to his headdress a garland of flowers. With a coco-nut in his hand the boy worships his household gods and gives them the coco-nut. He next bows low to the elders of his house. He is taken to the house door, his cheeks are touched with lampblack and red powder, he is seated on a horse and his relatives and friends go with him in procession to the house of his betrothed. To quiet evil spirits, coco-nuts are from time to time broken and thrown to them, and as the boy passes, the neighbours come out of their houses and wave lamps before him. On arrival at the house of his intended bride, the girl's father carries the boy into the marriage hall and seats him on a high wooden stool. After a number of minor ceremonies, the astrologer draws up two marriage papers, reads them aloud, and hands them to the fathers of the two families.

The really essential part of the marriage is the *saptapadi*, or the taking of seven steps. The sacrificial fire is kindled. To the left of the fire are put seven small heaps of rice. The boy and girl leave their seats and the boy throws three handfuls of rice into the fire. He

<sup>1</sup> The last part of the thread-girding ceremony is called the *sod munj*.



lifts up the girl and, carrying her on his left arm, walks twice round it. She then with the help of the bridegroom walks in turn over all the seven heaps of rice. The boy then again lifts her and for the third time walks round the fire. The seven steps have now been taken and the priest leads the boy and the girl out of the house and points out to them Dhruva, or the pole-star. They gaze at it, bow to it and return to the house. A pretty ceremony then ensues. In turn the boy and the girl take a roll of betel between their teeth and the other one bites off the end. The marriage festivities end with the throwing of coloured water over the boy by the bride's relations. Presents of clothes are exchanged and the bridegroom returns to his father's house.

The death of a high caste Hindu is as elaborately ordered as his life. When he is on the point of death, a spot in the women's hall is heaped with cowdung. *Tulsi* leaves are scattered over the spot and a blanket is spread over the leaves. On the blanket the dying man is laid with his feet to the south. A few drops of water from the holy Ganges are dropped into his mouth, a learned Brahman repeats verses from the *Vedas*, another reads the *Bhagwat Gita*, the speech made by Krishna to Arjuna on the battlefield of the Kurukshetra. His relations ask the dying man to repeat '*Ram ! Ram !*', the name of the divine hero of Ayodhya. His son sets his father's head upon his lap and comforts him, until he has drawn his last breath. When all is over, the women of the family sit round the body weeping and wailing, the male members sit in the verandah, and servants are sent to tell relatives and friends. Soon neighbours dressed in a waistcloth and shoulder-cloth drop in. One of them goes to the market and buys what is needed for the funeral. On his return the body is prepared for the burning ground. It is bathed and dressed only in a loin-cloth. A piece of gold and an emerald are put into the mouth. Some drops of Ganges water are dropped between the lips and over the body, the two thumbs and the two great toes are tied together with cloth. The body is laid on the bier and is covered over with a cloth from head to foot. If the dead man leaves children, a hole is made in the cloth over the mouth. If the dead man leaves a widow, she says aloud, 'Because of the great evil that has befallen me, I shall shave my head.' Thereupon she strips off her ornaments, breaks her bangles and her necklace, rubs off the red mark on her brow (which indicates that she is married), takes off her bodice and puts on a white robe. The family barber shaves off her hair. It is wrapped in her bodice and laid on her husband's bier. The funeral procession is now ready to start. The chief mourner walks first with a firepot hanging from a string in his hand. The bier is carried feet first by four of the dead man's nearest kinsmen. Beside the chief mourner walk two men. One holds a metal pot full of cooked rice, the other carries a winnowing fan with parched pulse and bits of coco-nut. These he throws before him to please the evil spirits. Other male mourners follow the bier bareheaded and barefooted, repeating in a low voice '*Ram, Ram*', '*Jay ! Jay ! Ram*'. No woman goes to the burning ground. When it is reached a funeral pile is built and the

bier placed on it with the feet of the body to the south. The sheet over the body is pulled aside, the cloths that bind the thumbs and the loincloth are cut, so that the body may return as it first came upon earth. The chief mourner lights the pile at the head and fans it with the end of his shoulder-cloth. When the skull bursts, the chief mourner stands near it with an earthen jar full of water. Another mourner makes a hole in the jar with a pebble. The chief mourner walks round the pyre, the water trickling from the jar. A second hole is made in the jar and the chief mourner walks again round the pyre. A third hole is made and a third round completed. The chief mourner throws the pot backward over his shoulder, spilling the water over the ashes. He next calls aloud striking his mouth with his hand. The procession is now ready to return home. Before starting, each mourner flings a pebble towards the nearest hill or mountain to relieve his feelings.

Mourning is observed for ten days during which the deceased's family eat neither betel nor sugar and drink no milk. They neither shave their heads nor wear shoes nor turbans. On the third day the chief mourner collects the dead man's burnt bones and either throws them into a neighbouring stream or pond or buries them in a jar to be taken a year later to the Ganges or Godavari. On the eleventh day the chief mourner, if he can afford to do so, brands and sets free two calves. The bellowing of the calf when branded is believed to carry the dead man to heaven, and its first cry opens the celestial doors for the dead man to enter. If the chief mourner cannot afford to set free two live calves, he makes and sets free two calves made out of dough. A cow called the Vaitaru cow is given to a priest so that the dead man may cross the river of blood and filth that separates earth and heaven by holding on to the cow's tail. A number of other presents are then given to the priest, and as he bestows them, the chief mourner says, 'I make you these gifts that the dead man may be freed from his sins and reach heaven in safety, and that all his life there he may have a cot to lie on, a packet of betel to eat, a maid to wait on him, an umbrella to shade him from the sun, and a stick to help him when walking.' The priest after receiving these gifts is supposed to become the ghost of the deceased. The inmates, therefore, pelt him away from the house with earth and cowdung. A few other ceremonies are performed and the mourning rites are over.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE CIVIL WAR AND THE REORGANIZATION

A.D. 1708 TO 1714

SHAHU should at once have followed up his victory by attacking Panhala, the seat of Tarabar's government. But he passed the monsoon of 1708 at Chandan Wandan trying to increase his forces. Among those to whom he appealed for arms and men was Sir Nicholas Waite, the Governor of Bombay, who politely regretted his inability

to help him. The king did not again take the field until October 1708, after celebrating the *Dasara* festival. He first took Vasantgad and next led his troops against Panhala. Tarabai fled from that fortress to Rangna. Shahu invested Panhala and besieged it with vigour. In spite of its great strength he soon forced the commandant to come to terms. The latter offered to join Shahu's cause if retained as the governor of the fortress. Shahu accepted the offer and early in 1709 moved against Vishalgad. The commandant surrendered it on the same terms that the Panhala commandant had done. The mighty stronghold of Rangna still remained in Tarabai's possession. In it were Ramchandra Nilkanth, Tarabai, her son and stepson Shivaji and Sambhaji. Ramchandra's first care was to send the royal party by a secret path to Malwan, which had once been Shivaji's naval base. He himself stayed and defended the fort with resource and resolution. Nevertheless he was soon reduced to the greatest straits. Had the siege been begun earlier Rangna must have fallen. Shahu himself directed the operations and nearly lost his life in doing so. One day as he inspected the works of the besieging army, his horse stumbled on the edge of a precipice. Sheikh Mira, who was with the king, deftly swung his master from the saddle, while Khando Ballal caught the bridle just in time to save the horse. But the season was far advanced. Shahu was unwilling to face the hardships of a monsoon campaign and readily listened to Dhanaji Jadav who, old and war-worn, suggested to his master that the time had come to raise the siege and to return to Satara.

At Satara the king consoled himself for his failure by marrying two fresh wives. One was the mild and gentle Sagunabai. The second was the haughty and imperious Sakwarbai. Both were daughters of the Shirke house. By these marriages he no doubt wished to renew the friendship of the Shirkes, which had been begun at Jinji when Rajaram escaped through their good offices.

But if Shahu feared the rigours of a monsoon campaign, no such fears dwelt in the dauntless bosom of Tarabai. Her agents won to her cause Phond Savant of Savantwadi. In 1662, as it will be remembered, Shivaji reduced to vassalage the Savant chief Lakkam Savant. The latter died in 1665, three years after his defeat. His brother Bhav Phond succeeded him and ruled Savantwadi until 1675. He was followed by Khem Savant, a brave but faithless prince, who during the war of independence artfully increased his power by joining as it suited his interests the standard of Rajaram or Aurangzib. When Shahu returned, Khem Savant favoured his cause. But Khem Savant died early in 1709 and was succeeded by Phond Savant. Seduced by Tarabai's promises, he sent the queen a well-equipped body of troops, with which she marched against Panhala. The commandant who had already committed one treason was soon convinced that a second treason was the only remedy for the first. Early in 1710 he surrendered the fortress to Tarabai. Gratified by her success, she brought her idiot son to Kolhapur,<sup>1</sup> which she proclaimed

<sup>1</sup> Panhala is only a morning's drive from Kolhapur.

the capital of the Maratha kingdom. She next sent her agents everywhere to corrupt the loyalty of those Maratha chiefs who had adhered to Shivaji. She urged the chiefs to make themselves independent, or even join the Moghuls rather than serve under the banner of a proclaimed impostor. Her advice fell on willing ears. So long as the Moghuls threatened their independence, the Maratha chiefs willingly combined against them under the leadership of Tarabai or Rajaram. But the Moghul danger had past. The emperor and Shahu were friends. Of the two services, that of the emperor offered more attractions. Military distinction could more easily be won on the far flung Moghul front than in the narrow Deccan. Moreover, the captains who served the emperor were in their own fiefs independent princes. Shivaji and his successors hitherto had given their nobles grants of money rather than assignments of land. This rule had no doubt been relaxed after the great king's death, but it still held good and Shahu, firmly seated on the throne, would no doubt enforce it. The first to join the imperial service was Nemaji Sindia. During Tarabai's regency he had established himself in central India or Malwa<sup>1</sup>. On the death of Aurangzib, Zulfikar Khan had won him over to the cause of Bahadur Shah and he had aided Zulfikar Khan in the battle wherein fell the unhappy Kam Baksh. His services were handsomely rewarded and he was made a commander of 7,000 horse, while high posts were also bestowed on his sons and grandsons. Other chiefs proclaimed themselves independent. The most notable of these was the Maratha admiral Kanhoji Angre, of whom a full account will be given hereafter. A Brahman named Krishnarao established himself near the great temple of Sundar Mahadev at Khatav, a town less than twenty miles from Satara. After the capture and execution of Shivaji's son Sambhaji, Krishnarao had joined the Moghul cause and had received from the emperor the title of Maharaja, and as fief, or *jaghire*, the *pargana*, or district, of Khatav<sup>2</sup>. During the siege of Jinji Ramchandra Nilkanth, viceroy of Maharashtra, had given as appanage to a Maratha noble called Damaji Thorat the district of Supa, north of Poona, and that of Patas on the main road between Poona and Baramati. At Hingangaon, a village close to Patas, Damaji had built himself a strong castle and with a body of free-lances used to levy contributions from the peasants up to the very walls of Satara. North of Satara, Shankar Narayan, the *Pant Sachiv*, held for Tarabai Poona and the great forts of Sinhgad, Purandar, Rajgad and Torna, in this way cutting Shahu off from all communication with Khândesh and Nasik. Thus by the end of 1710 the king's cause, which in 1708 had seemed so prosperous, again began to flag. His territory was reduced to the land round Satara and a few hill-forts garrisoned by loyal officers. So low, indeed, had his cause sunk that but for a singular piece of good fortune, it is doubtful whether he would not himself have been forced to invoke Moghul aid and to become a petty subordinate of the empire. The fortunate event was the strange collapse of Shankar Narayan Gandekar. After his failure against

<sup>1</sup> *Khatir Khan.*

<sup>2</sup> *Riyasat*, Vol. II, p. 51.

Rangna, Shahu resolved to try and reduce the ring of forts round Poona. It was with their capture that the great king had begun his wonderful career, and they were regarded by the Maratha people as the keys of the Maratha kingdom. So long as they were in Tarabai's hands, her son might well be deemed the true successor of Shivaji and Sambhaji. On the other hand Tarabai, who had carefully provisioned and garrisoned them and had entrusted their defence to the skilful hands of Shankar Narayan, looked forward with confidence to their prolonged resistance. Long before her fortresses fell, her armies would be able to attack with effect Shahu's rear and retake Satara. Neither side foresaw nor could have foreseen how Shankar Narayan would act. Lovers of Walter Scott will remember how in *Ivanhoe*, Brian de Bois Guilbert, in the fulness of his strength and manhood and unhurt by Ivanhoe's spear, fell to the ground slain by the violence of his own contending feelings. A similar fate overtook the *Pant Sachiv*. Trusting to Tarabai's word that Shahu was a pretending knave, Shankar Narayan had sworn to defend her son's cause against all comers. He was now convinced that Shahu was no impostor but Sambhaji's son. Devotedly loyal to the house of Shivaji, himself a hero of the war of independence, Shankar Narayan could not bear to fight against the great king's grandson. At the same time he had sworn an oath of loyalty to Tarabai, which he could not as an honourable man break. The dilemma in which he found himself was too great for that loyal, brave and simple soul. While he hesitated what course to pursue, Shahu's troops stormed Rajgad and threatened Sinhgad and Torna. Forced at last to a decision, he chose a course of conduct, that would present itself more readily to an eastern than a western mind. He resigned his charge and his powers and, donning the garb of an anchorite, went to reside at Ambavade, a holy place on the Nira river.<sup>1</sup> But even thus he did not escape from the vexations of life. Ramchandra Nilkanth, incensed at what he regarded as desertion, sharply reprimanded Shankar Narayan and accused him of cowardice. The charge weighed heavily on one who had taken cities and won stricken fields. One way remained by which he might prove to his old master that fear of death had not prompted his action. He built for himself a small raft. To each end he fastened earthen jars, in the bottoms of which holes had been bored. Seating himself on the raft, he had it towed to a deep pool in the Nira river. As the water entered the jars, the raft sank, carrying with it the gallant but misguided soldier. Shahu, with a magnanimity worthy of Charles II of England, took no action against Shankar Narayan's infant son, Naro Shankar. He confirmed him in his father's office of *Pant Sachiv*. Not to be outdone in generosity, the *child's mutalik*; or agent, declared for the king and

<sup>1</sup> *Bhor Samsthancha Itihas and Chitnis Bakhar*. Ambavade is sacred to the memory of the Maratha saint Nagnath. A short account of him will be found in my *Tales of the Saints of Pandharpur*. The clothes of office could not be worn by Shankar's son, then only a baby. They were, therefore, tied to his cradle.

thus enabled Shahu without the loss of a single man to recover the keys of Maharashtra (1711).

In spite of this success the revolt of the Maratha nobles remained a serious menace. The next to leave the royal service was Chandrasen Jadhav, the son of Dhanaji Jadhav. His father's early adherence to Shahu had greatly furthered the king's cause. But in June 1710,<sup>1</sup> one of Dhanaji Jadhav's many wounds reopened in his leg and after a prolonged illness the brave old soldier died at Wadgaon on the banks of the Warna river. In the royal service, but subordinate to Dhanaji, was a Brahman officer named Balaji Vishvanath Bhat. He was by caste a Chitpavan Brahman, a caste of which the following curious legend is told. The story runs that Parashu Rama, the Brahman incarnation of the god Vishnu, to avenge the murder of his father Jamadagni by the Kshatriya king Sahasrarjuna, cleared the earth twenty-one times of the Kshatriya clans. Thereafter he was so reeking with blood that no other Brahmans would eat with him. He therefore went to the summit of the Sahyadris and stood gazing at the sea, which then washed the foot of the mountains, and pondered where he could find Brahmans who would dine with him. As he looked, he saw floating on the surface of the water the corpses of fourteen *mlenchas*, or barbarians. He dragged them ashore, built a great pyre and burnt them to ashes. From the ashes he created fourteen live Brahmans who had no scruples about eating with their creator. The meal over, the fourteen Brahmans begged Parashu Rama to give them a land wherein they might live. The hero drew the mighty bow given him by the god Shiva and shot an arrow into the Arabian Sea. He then commanded the sea to go back within its borders as far as the spot where the arrow had fallen. The ocean did so, thus leaving bare the Konkan. This reclaimed tract Parashu Rama bestowed on the fourteen Brahmans. They went to dwell there and built themselves a town called Chitpolan, or the Town of the Burnt Heart, which in course of time became Chiplun. To themselves they gave the name of Chitpavans, or Brahmans Purified by the Funeral Pyre.

Whatever truth may underlie this romantic tale,<sup>2</sup> Balaji Vishvanath Bhat and his brother Janoji were the hereditary *deshmukhs*, or revenue officers, of Shrivardhan and Harihar, two villages to the north of Bankot creek. The office of *deshmukh* or *desai* was a creation of the Musulman government. The headman of the village was a Maratha *patil*, and under the ancient Hindu rulers, he acted directly under the supreme government. The Musulman governors sought to decentralize the administration by appointing an intermediate officer—known as *deshmukh*—and usually a Brahman—to supervise the work of the *patils*. Besides acting as *deshmukhs*, the Bhat family administered in Shrivardhan the revenues of the temples of Somaji, Laxminarayan,

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff gives the date as 1709. But see *Riyasat*, Vol. II, p. 12. The Hindu year was *Shaka* 1632 (1632 + 78 = 1710).

<sup>2</sup> Various authors have inferred from this tale that the Chitpavan Brahmans are foreign immigrants from Arabia, Egypt or even Scandinavia. My own view is that the legend contains no truth whatever. Exactly the same legend is told by the Beni-Israel to explain their presence in the Bombay Presidency.

Baheri and Kalashri, and they yearly distributed among the Brahmans of the neighbourhood thirty-two and a half measures (*khandis*) of rice. In the year 1648, the office of *deshmukh* of Danda Rajpuri fell vacant and was conferred on the ancestor of Balaji and Janoji, and remained in the Bhat family until 1818. According to the author of the *Peshwa Rakhar*, the Sidis of Janjira on becoming masters of Shrivardhan confirmed Balaji and Janoji in their office. Afterwards the Sidis came to suspect the brothers of an intrigue with Kanhoji Angre. They first seized Janoji, sewed him up in a sack and, rowing out a mile from land, dropped the sack into the water. Balaji succeeded in escaping to the neighbouring town of Velas on the southern side of the Bankot creek. In Velas lived a Chitpavan family called Bhanu. It consisted of three brothers Balaji Mahadev, Hari Mahadev and Ramaji Mahadev. They received the fugitive kindly and on hearing his story resolved to flee with him. They feared that if they stayed behind, the Sidis would punish them for having harboured an enemy. They made their way to Rahimatpur where Balaji had a friend in Ghanashyam Narayan Shenvi, an officer in Dhanaji's service, who had once been hospitably entertained by Balaji's father Vishvanath. Ghanashyam welcomed the party and, introducing them to Dhanaji Jadhav, obtained for Balaji and two of the brothers posts under the commander-in-chief. Ramaji Mahadev took service with Shankar Narayan.

This account was accepted by Grant Duff and until recent times was regarded as the true account of the origin of the Bhat Peshwas. Modern critics, however, doubted this fantastic story. They could not believe that within six years any one, however fortunate, could even in those troubled times rise from a humble clerkship to the post of first minister. Their suspicions were confirmed by a reference to Balaji Vishvanath Sabhasad in an official Marathi paper dated 1696. The title Sabhasad, corresponding with that of Privy Councillor, was only conferred on men who had been some years in the royal service. Balaji Vishvanath must therefore have entered it some years before 1696. The discovery of this paper was followed by the discovery of several others. They showed that from 1699 to 1702 Balaji acted as *Sarsubhedar* of the Poona district and from 1704 to 1707 as *Sarsubhedar* of Daulatabad. But just as to-day a Civil Servant does not become a Commissioner until he has served for many years as Assistant Collector and Collector, so Balaji before he became *Sarsubhedar* must have served as *Shekhdar*, *Kamavisdar* and *Subhedar*. Thus in all probability Balaji entered the royal service in Sambhaji's reign, or at any rate in the early years of Rajaram's regency. From this it does not follow that the legend in the *Bakhars* is wholly untrue. It may well be that Balaji or his father fled from Shrivardhan in circumstances similar to those therein described. But the Sidis' victim could not have been Janoji, for an entry in his handwriting discovered by Rajwade, shows that in 1706 he was still alive.

In the troubles provoked by Shahu's return to the Deccan, Balaji Vishvanath found his opportunity. He was then in high office under

Dhanaji Jadhav and, according to Mr. Khare, it was Balaji who, at the battle of Khed, persuaded that commander to give to Shahu his valuable support. Thereafter Dhanaji Jadhav's esteem for Balaji Vishvanath and his confidence in his capacity aroused the bitter jealousy of the former's son Chandrasen Jadhav.<sup>1</sup> Enraged that his father should prefer to his son's counsel the advice of a Konkan Brahman, Chandrasen began to intrigue with Tarabai. Upon his father's death Chandrasen was invested with the robes and the dignity of the commander-in-chief, and King Shahu, releasing from prison the *Pratimdh*<sup>2</sup> Parashuram, sent him and Khanderao Dabhade to convey to the young noble the royal condolences. By this act of courtesy Shahu no doubt hoped to retain Chandrasen's loyalty. He failed in his object, for not long afterwards Chandrasen boasted in a letter to Tarabai that he had won to her cause Khanderao Dabhade, Mansing More and Haibatrao Nimbalkar. The king, at last aware of Chandrasen's intrigues, appointed Balaji Vishvanath nominally to control his collection but really to watch his conduct. The appointment of his enemy to such a post sufficed to turn Chandrasen's jealousy into murderous hatred, and he now only sought an excuse to destroy him. Late in the year 1710 Chandrasen was leading a large force near Malegaon in the Baramati taluka. As the country abounded in game, herds of antelope broke away started in front of it. When the troops had all but reached their camping-ground, a young black buck rose suddenly at the feet of a certain Piraji, an officer in Balaji Vishvanath's contingent. Piraji with several troopers raced madly after it. After a long chase, it took shelter in the tent of Vyasrao, a Brahman clerk of Chandrasen Jadhav. Piraji demanded that the wretched beast should be handed over to him. Vyasrao, with a Brahman's tenderness for animal life, replied that he could not do so, as the beast had sought his protection. Baulked of his prey, Piraji threw his spear at Vyasrao and wounded him. Shocked at what he had done, he ran to Balaji Vishvanath and confessed his crime. Vyasrao complained to Chandrasen. The latter required the instant surrender of Piraji. Balaji while expressing his regret at Piraji's cut, refused to hand him over, claiming that it was for him to punish his subordinate. The mutual dislike of the two leaders burst into flame. Chandrasen ordered his troops to attack Balaji's contingent and to seize Piraji. Balaji fled with his men to Purandar fort and sought an asylum of the *Pant Sachiv*. Chandrasen brought up his force and, besieging Purandar, demanded Balaji as the price of peace. The *Pant Sachiv*, fearing the formidable vengeance of the young noble, begged Balaji to leave the fort. At dead of night the Brahman with his wife, his children, Ambaji Purandare and some five hundred horsemen stole out of Indra's fortress and fled to the Nira river. There Chandrasen overtook them.

<sup>1</sup> Dhanaji Jadhav left three sons. The eldest Santaji, by Dhanaji's first wife, had quarrelled with his father and had separated from him and left him. By his second wife Gopikabai, Dhanaji had Chandrasen and Shambhusing. We shall hear of Shambhusing later. Gopikabai burnt herself with Dhanaji Jadhav's body. *Riyasat*, Vol. II, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Riyasat*, Vol. II, p. 38.



and killed or dispersed Balaji's troopers. Balaji and his family, accompanied by a faithful officer named Pilaji Jadhav and Ambaji Purandare, fled for their lives to Pandavgad, the fortress which, named after the Pandava heroes of the *Mahabharata*, still towers over Wai. From the shelter of Pandavgad, Balaji sent Ambaji Purandare to Satara to tell the king what had happened. Purandare at first approached Govindrao Chitnis, the son of Khando Ballal Chitnis. Govindrao listened attentively to the story and sympathized with Balaji. He advised Purandare to enlist the sympathies of one Lingav, the maid-servant of Shahu's mistress Virubai. Purandare followed his advice. Lingav told the tale to Virubai, who repeated it to Shahu's queen Sagunabai, and the two ladies won the royal ear. Shahu sent a force to Pandavgad to escort Balaji in safety to his capital and ordered Chandrasen to present himself at Satara and lay his case before him. The turbulent noble, instead of obeying the order, sent back a message that unless the king at once handed over Balaji to his vengeance, he (Chandrasen) would renounce his allegiance. Such language no sovereign could tolerate. He ordered Haibatrao Nimbalkar to reduce Chandrasen Jadhav to obedience. Haibatrao Nimbalkar attacked Chandrasen at Adarki in the Phaltan state, now a station on the South Maratha Railway, and severely defeated him. Chandrasen with the remains of his army retired to Panhala, where he openly joined the cause of Tarabai (April 1711).

Worse was yet to follow. In spite of his victory over Chandrasen Jadhav, Haibatrao Nimbalkar began also to open negotiations with Kolhapur. Large detachments of the royal troops were at this time on field service in Khandesh and Berar. The only high officer on whom the king could for the moment rely was Balaji Vishvanath, and his contingent had just been dispersed. Shahu, however, sent for Balaji and sought his advice how to suppress the disorders of the kingdom (1711). With the optimism of greatness, Balaji undertook to raise a fresh army. He soon collected round him two thousand of his old soldiers and with these as a nucleus soon created a respectable field force. The king showed his gratitude in a fitting way. On August 20, 1711, he conferred on his capable servant the well-deserved title of Sena Kartea, or Maker of Armies.

While Balaji was thus forging a weapon with which to meet in the field his master's enemies, he turned against Tarabai her own armoury of intrigue. As long as that daring and active woman remained in power at Kolhapur, it was impossible to restore Shahu's authority. It so chanced that late in 1711 a fresh quarrel broke out between Tarabai and her wise old counsellor Ramchandra Nilkanth. The latter relaxed his control over the affairs of his mistress and gave Balaji the chance for which he sought. He instantly sent a message to Rajaram's younger widow Rajasbai and offered her Shahu's support, if she overthrew Tarabai and substituted for the rule of the imbecile Shivaji that of her own son Sambhaji. Eagerly Rajasbai accepted the offer. In 1712, with the aid of several of the Kolhapur nobles—Girjoji Jadhav, Antaji Trimal, Tulaji Shitole and others—she corrupted the garrison of Panhala, overthrew Tarabai's government,

and flung her and her son Shivaji into prison.<sup>1</sup> She then had Sambhaji crowned in Shivaji's stead. Ramchandra Nilkanth escaped Tarabai's fate, but was dismissed from his office.<sup>2</sup> Chandrasen Jadhav, fearing that Sambhaji might surrender him to Shahu, sent his lieutenant Apparao to Nizam-ul-Mulk, the new viceroy of the Deccan. The Nizam gladly welcomed the overtures of so distinguished a commander. He offered him a fief with twenty-five lakhs a year on condition that he kept fully equipped fifteen thousand men. Chandrasen accepted the offer and from that time on was the unrelenting enemy of the Maratha cause. For a few years Sambhaji and Rajasbai, grateful to Balaji for his help and advice, ceased openly to make war against Shahu. Those few years sufficed; and when Sambhaji again became actively hostile, Balaji had restored order in Shahu's dominions.

It must, however, be admitted that Balaji's new troops did not meet with immediate success. But that was rather the general's fault than theirs. In the cold weather of 1711 the king ordered Balaji to reduce Damaji Thorat. Balaji with Ambaji Purandare as his lieutenant led out his troops against the robber baron of Hingangaon. But they allowed themselves to be outwitted. Damaji Thorat professed himself willing to lay down his arms and invited the two commanders to enter his castle at Hingangaon and discuss with him the terms of surrender. He swore by the holy *bel* tree and the hardly less holy *bhandar*,<sup>3</sup> or turmeric, that he would allow them to enter and leave Hingangaon unharmed. Balaji and Purandare, thinking that no Hindu would dare break so binding a contract, went to the freebooter's castle and were at once thrown into a dungeon. To their remonstrances Damaji Thorat with odious levity replied that the *bel* was after all but a tree and that every day all of them ate turmeric. For himself he attached no importance to such a promise. At the same time he threatened to put over their heads bags of hot ashes unless they speedily paid him a large ransom. The news of their confinement reached the king who paid the ransom and obtained their release.

Balaji undaunted by this mishap, planned next the reduction of Krishnarao of Khatao. Before, however, he set his forces in motion, he resolved, if it were humanly possible, to win over to Shahu's side Parashuram Trimbak, the *Pratimdu*. Ever since the fall of Satara that gallant soldier had languished in prison. For on his return from his mission to Chandrasen Jadhav, the king had made him go back to his dungeon in Satara. At Balaji's advice the king released Parashuram and entrusted to him the great fort of Vishalgad and the surrounding country. Parashuram sent his eldest son Krishnaji to

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff has related that Shivaji died of small-pox in 1713. Thereupon Ramchandra Nilkanth removed Tarabai from the government. This is not correct. Shivaji did not die until 1723. The names of Rajasbai's confederates are taken from a letter written by Tarabai herself.

<sup>2</sup> 'Lately,' writes Tarabai, 'our cause has suffered greatly. Sambhaji and Rajasbai with the help of Gijochi (*sic*) Yadav, Antaji Trimal and the garrison and Tulaji Shitole have seated Sambhaji Raja on the throne and put us in prison.' *Khyasat*, Vol. II, p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> He died in 1720.

<sup>4</sup> *Bel* and *bhandar* are both sacred to the god Khandoba of Jejuri.

assume charge of his new possession. Krishnaji did so and shortly afterwards deserted to Sambhaji, who as a reward for his treachery made him *Pratinidhi* of the Kolhapur kingdom. Shahu, furious at the son's treason, threw the father back into prison and ordered his eyes to be put out. Parashuram's second son Shripatrao was in Satara and heard of the order. He rushed to the house of Khando Ballal Chitnis, whom he found in his bath. With his garments still dripping,<sup>1</sup> the kindly Prabhu ran to Shahu's palace, reminded him of Parashuram's former services and insisted that the king should remit the cruel sentence. With the royal paper in his hand, Khando Ballal rode to Parashuram's cell. He reached it just in time. Parashuram had been flung on his back and a great stone placed on his chest. On the stone was seated the jail surgeon. Khando Ballal Chitnis rushed in, knocked over the jail surgeon with a blow in the face, rolled away the stone and saved his friend. Parashuram was so grateful for Khando Ballal's intercession that at the next *shradha* festival, the day when Hindus honour their dead ancestors, he gave a great banquet. To it, although he was a Deshastha Brahman, he invited Khando Ballal Chitnis, a Prabhu. To the king he showed his gratitude in a more practical manner. Knowing that Balaji was about to attack Krishnarao of Khatao, he begged and obtained leave to send with Balaji his son Shripatrao. As the youth was leaving, Parashuram sent for him and bade him either die in battle or so bear himself as to win for his father the royal favour. The young man eagerly complied and in course of a hard-fought battle his valour and example won the day. The rebel army was destroyed, and Krishnarao and his eldest son fell dead on the battlefield. His two younger sons fled and implored the royal pardon. Magnanimous as ever, Shahu not only gave it, but confirmed them in possession of the town of Khatao (1713). As a reward for Shripatrao's gallantry the king again offered Parashuram the office of *Pratinidhi* (April 1713). This time Parashuram accepted it. In his judgment, the appointment of his son Krishnarao to the post of *Pratinidhi* of Kolhapur, Parashuram's own office, released him from his allegiance to Sambhaji. He was no longer a Kolhapur officer and was free to take service with Shahu. The king never again entrusted Parashuram with an army, but he greatly esteemed him and often acted on his advice, and he showed his appreciation of the gallant old man by frequent gifts of land and money.

In the cold weather of the same year (1713) Shahu resolved to reduce Kanhoji Angre. Kanhoji Angre was the son of Tukoji Angre, who had during Shivaji's reign become famous as a sailor. The real name of the Angre family was Sangpal, but as their native village was Angarwadi they had come to call themselves Angre. Tukoji died in 1690 leaving a son Kanhoji Angre, who was destined to advance still further the family fortunes. He had long been reputed a skilful seaman and in Sambhaji's reign he had been promoted to high command in the royal fleet. At that time the chief Maratha

<sup>1</sup> Hindus do not strip entirely when bathing.

strongholds on the coast were Sagargad under Mankoji Suryavanshi, Khanderi under Udaji Padval, Rajkot under Subhanji Kharate and Kolaba under Bhivaji Gujar. On the capture of King Sambhaji, Mankoji Suryavanshi, Udaji Padval and Subhanji Kharate deserted their charges and fled to the fort of Prabhalgad. Bhiwaji Gujar and Kanhoji Angre divided between themselves the coast fortresses. In 1697, the two Maratha leaders quarrelled and Bhiwaji Gujar, imprisoned by Kanhoji Angre, soon died, leaving Angre supreme in the Maratha Konkan. Angre received from Tarabai the title of Sarkhel, or admiral, of the Maratha fleet and availed himself of her quarrel with Shahu to make himself independent. Feigning to act under Tarabai's orders, he had seized the town of Kalyan and the surrounding districts as well as the great fort of Rajmachi below the Bhore ghat and that of Lohgad just above it. To subdue this powerful noble Shahu despatched a large force under his Peshwa Bahiro Pingle. Unhappily Pingle was a man of mediocre talents. Kanhoji Angre was one of the first soldiers of his time. He defeated Bahiro Pingle in a pitched battle, took him prisoner and, throwing him into a dungeon in Lohgad, openly talked of an advance on Satara. Shahu in alarm ordered Balaji Vishvanath with fresh troops to oppose his march. But Balaji wisely trusted to diplomacy rather than arms. He formed the view that the royal government was no longer strong enough to adhere to Shivaji's old constitution, under which the king aided by his eight ministers was the sole ruler in his dominions. The time had come when that ideal must be put aside as an impossible counsel of excellence. Let the king give his nobles grants of land instead of money and allow them within their confines to act as vassal princes rather than salaried officers. Shahu accepted his minister's advice and consented to the change. Balaji, invested with full powers, met the Maratha admiral at Lonavla. The two had kindly feelings for each other from the days when Balaji Vishvanath lived in the Konkan. Balaji spoke eloquently of the danger which the Maratha people ran under rulers divided against each other. His eloquence touched the war-worn sailor's heart and Angre agreed to accept Shahu's terms. He was confirmed in the title of Sarkhel of the royal fleet and was allowed to retain Rajmachi and a number of lesser forts in the Konkan.<sup>1</sup> At the same time Balaji joined his forces with Angre's and the combined armies invaded the Sidis' possessions on the western coast. The Sidis were rapidly driven out of Shrivardhan, Balaji's birth-place, and several other points on the coast which Angre added to his fief. Thereafter Angre released Bahiro Pingle and became an allied confederate of the king. In this way the Maratha confederacy was born.

Shahu, delighted with Balaji's success, removed Bahirao Pingle from the post of Peshwa wherein he had so signally failed and on

<sup>1</sup> The forts mentioned by Mr. Sardesai were Khanderi, Kolaba, Suvarnadurg, Jaygad, Devgad, Kanakdurg, Fatehdurg, Avachitgad and Yeswantgad besides 16 lesser places, *e. g.* Bahirugad, Kolata, Bikatgad, Manikgad, Mrgad, Sagargad, Rasulgad, Ramdurg, Khaerpattan, Rajapur, Amberi, Satvadem, Shrivacha and Manaranjan.

November 16, 1713, conferred it on Balaji Vishvanath<sup>1</sup>. At the same time he directed Balaji to unite the forces of the kingdom against Damaji Thorat. After the failure of Balaji's expedition, Shahu had called on the *Pant Sachiv* to reduce the graceless filibuster. Naro Shankar, the *Pant Sachiv*, was still a tiny child, but his *mutahk*, or agent, took him on field service to encourage the troops. Unfortunately Damaji Thorat proved as formidable in battle as in low intrigue. He overthrew the *Pant Sachiv's* troops and took the little boy and his *mutahk* prisoners. These also the king ransomed. Before Balaji started on the third expedition, Shahu, anxious to give Damaji Thorat a last chance of returning to his allegiance, invited him to meet him at Jejuri and promised him a safe conduct. There he graciously received the rebel chieftain and offered him the most favourable terms. Confident in the strength of the castle and in his numerous and well-trained bands, Thorat bore himself with such overweening pride as to make reconciliation impossible. The king dismissed him, and the royal commanders converged on Damaji Thorat's castle. Damaji met the king's troops in the open, but for all his skill he was beaten and driven into Hingangaon. He defended himself bravely behind his castle walls, but they were breached and the place stormed. Damaji Thorat was taken prisoner and sent to a dungeon in Purandar. His fortress was utterly destroyed and the spot where it had stood was ploughed up by donkeys. The king was more pleased than ever with Balaji. To reward him and at the same time to show his displeasure at the *Pant Sachiv's* failure, Shahu took from the latter the fort of Purandar and the town of Sasvad and conferred them on Balaji Vishvanath. Balaji in turn made Ambaji Purandare his *mutahk*, or principal agent, and Ramji Mahadev Bhanu his confidential clerk.

Order had now been restored by the talents and skill of Shahu's minister. To celebrate his victories the king invited Kanhoji Angre to visit him. Angre obeyed the summons and met his master at Jejuri in the spring of 1718. The temple of Jejuri has several times been mentioned in these pages. It was there that Shivaji greeted Shahaji when the father brought to the son the peace offers of Bijapur. Jejuri was then a tiny place, but in the early years of Shahu's reign it had been greatly improved and enlarged by Krishnarao of Khatao, who, although a free-lance, was in religious matters strictly orthodox and was highly esteemed by his countrymen as the author of a Sanskrit work on the 1,000 names of the god Vishnu. The present noble structure, one of the wonders of the Deccan, was built long afterwards by Ahalyabai and Tukoji Holkar. The deity worshipped in the Jejuri temple is the god Khandoba, an incarnation from the god Shiva. A legend relates that in ancient times some Brahmans were attacked and their property carried off by a demon called Malla. The Brahmans prayed to Shiva and he took the form of a warrior named Khandoba and slew the demon. Before he died Malla became a convert to

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff's statement that the *Pant Sachiv's* mother Yesubai gave Purandar to Balaji as a sign of her gratitude is incorrect. The governorships of the fort were still in the gift of the king. *Riyasat*, Vol. II, p. 56.

Shaivism, whereupon both he and Khandoba were absorbed into Shiva

Khanhoji Angre presented to the king a *nazar*, or tribute of sea-borne merchandise, and received in exchange a richly embroidered shawl. He stayed over the *Holi* festival and in the time-honoured manner Shahu and his nobles covered themselves with red liquid. From Jejuri the king and his court moved to Satara. There Shahu and Angre removed in prolonged conversations all possible causes of misunderstanding. After a further exchange of presents, Angre took an affectionate farewell of his sovereign and returned to his stronghold on the western coast.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### AFFAIRS AT DELHI

A D 1707 TO 1719

AFTER the death of Aurangzib Maratha history becomes once again connected more or less closely with that of Delhi. As I have related, Shah Alam under the title of Bahadur Shah became after the defeat and death of his brothers emperor of Hindustan. Shah Alam was the kindest and most humane of men, but he lacked the vigour that was needed to make secure the tottering throne of the Moghuls. He succeeded his father at the age of sixty-seven and for nearly fifty years he had never known a moment free from the fear of death or imprisonment. He ruled for less than five years, most of which he passed in fighting the Sikhs, who had now become a formidable power. In February 1712 he suddenly issued a peremptory order to destroy every dog both in his own camp and in Lahore city. An order so needlessly cruel in the mouth of so kindly a prince raised fears that his mind had failed. The fears were justified, and on February 16, 1712, he fell into a swoon from which he never recovered. The emperor's second son Azimushan was his father's favourite and at once seized the royal treasure and proclaimed himself emperor. But Zulfikar Khan lent his powerful support to Bahadur Shah's other three sons. Azimushan was defeated and fell on the battle-field. Before his defeat, his three brothers had agreed to divide the empire. But with the death of their rival, their amity vanished. Moizuddin, the eldest, fought in turn his two brothers and with Zulfikar Khan's help emerged from the struggle the sole survivor. He mounted the throne under the title of Jehandar Shah on June 9, 1712.

The new emperor was not without abilities, but he was wholly under the sway of a pretty dancing girl Lal Koor. After the manner of her kind, she sought to retain her dominion over her lover by keeping him under the influence of drugs and liquor. Nor was Zulfikar Khan averse from Jehandar Shah's self-indulgence. He relieved his master of all affairs of state and became in fact, if not in name, emperor of Delhi. Lal Koor used her influence to exalt her brother Khosal and her former friends. Khosal was made a commander of seven thousand

men. A woman called Zahra, who had been kind to Lal Koor when a child, became so rich that she assumed the state of the greatest nobles in court. One day Zahra was passing with her retinue down the street when she met Mir Kamaruddin, better known as Chin Kulich Khan, a title given him by Aurangzib. He was the son of Firoz Jang<sup>1</sup> and the grandson of that Fulich Khan who in 1687 had fallen before Golconda. After Aurangzib's death Chin Kulich Khan had retired from court, content with the wealth which his father had amassed. Seeing Zahra approach on her elephant he made his retinue move aside to let her pass. With the insolence of an upstart, Zahra rebuked Chin Kulich Khan for not making way for her sooner. 'Chin Kulich Khan,' she cried, 'you must surely be the son of a blind father not to move out of the road.' The hot blood of Turkestan boiled in the soldier's veins at the insult. At his signal his retinue threw themselves upon the servants of Zahra, beat them severely and finally dragged Zahra herself out of her gaily decked howdah. Realizing his danger Chin Kulich Khan went straight to Zulfikar Khan, implored and obtained his protection. Thereafter he returned to court and asked to be reinstated in the imperial service. Such was the unpromising beginning of the career of the great Nizam-ul-Mulk, the ancestor of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad.

In no long time the folly of Jehandar Shah, the whims of his mistress, and the overbearing manners of Zulfikar Khan estranged the Moghul nobles and they readily sought a pretender to the throne. Over the great and wealthy province of Bengal ruled Farukhsir, a son of Azimushan. On Aurangzib's death Azimushan, marching to his father's help, left behind him Farukhsir as his deputy. On the borders of Bengal were two brothers who, as Sayads, claimed to be descended from the loins of the Prophet. Hussein Ali Khan was governor of Bihar. His brother Abdulla Khan was governor of Allahabad. These two powerful nobles Farukhsir won to his cause, and in November 1712, the combined armies of the three provinces marched to Delhi. In spite of the gallantry of Zulfikar Khan, Jehandar Shah suffered a complete defeat and was betrayed to Farukhsir by Zulfikar Khan's father, Asad Khan. The latter's infamy saved his own life but not his son's. Asad Khan and Zulfikar Khan paid their respects to Farukhsir, but as they rose to go, Zulfikar Khan was detained. He had been the chief cause of Azimushan's failure to win the throne and in the eyes of Farukhsir he had sinned beyond forgiveness. He was led into a side tent and charged with the desertion of Azim Shah and with treason to Azimushan. Zulfikar Khan met the charges with undaunted bearing, but at last seeing that his cause had already been judged, he bade his tormentors kill him instead of asking him idle questions. The words had hardly left his lips when a band of ruffians threw themselves on him and strangled him to death. So died this talented soldier, the one officer in Aurangzib's army, who knew perfectly the science of Deccan warfare.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Khat'i Khan*. Firoz Jang died in Gujarat in 1709.

<sup>2</sup> Briggs, *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin*, p. 122.

Farukhsir was soon to regret the murder of one who might have proved an ally against the two Sayad brothers. They assumed complete control of the state and reduced the emperor's power to a cipher. Jehandar Shah had willingly resigned to Zulfikar Khan the reins of office, but Farukhsir resented the tyranny of his two allies. Not daring to dismiss them, he fawned on them to their faces, but behind their backs wove scheme after scheme for their destruction. On Farukhsir's elevation, he appointed Chin Kulich Khan to succeed Zulfikar Khan as viceroy of the Deccan, and Chin Kulich Khan induced Shahu in return for imperial recognition to agree to support Farukhsir with ten thousand horse. The emperor now recalled Chin Kulich Khan and sent the Sayad, Hussein Ali Khan, to take his place. Directly Hussein Ali Khan had left Delhi, the emperor begged Daud Khan to attack and destroy him. Daud Khan, who had been Zulfikar Khan's former deputy and had since been named governor of Gujarat, accepted readily the task. He enlisted a number of Maratha troops, especially those under Nemaaji Sindia, who had made himself master of the entire revenues of Aurangabad. On August 25, 1716, the two armies met on the plain outside Burhanpur. Daud Khan was renowned through India for his courage. His gallantry had won the battle when a stray musket ball struck him in the forehead, killing him on the spot. Fortune at once changed sides and Daud Khan's victorious army became a routed mob. Nemaaji Sindia, of whom Daud Khan had expected great things, took no part in the action, but, galloping about with his cavalry on the outskirts of the battle, only joined in it, when he saw Daud Khan's force finally dispersed. He then rode up to Hussein Ali Khan, congratulated him on his victory and applied himself to plundering Daud Khan's effects.

Hussein Ali Khan, secure in the viceroyalty of the Deccan, tried to clear his province of Maratha marauders. The chief amongst these was Khanderao Dabhade. He had actually built a number of mud block-houses along the Surat-Burhanpur road,<sup>1</sup> and kept a revenue officer there to levy the *chauth* which the Marathas now claimed not only over the Deccan, but over Gujarat as well. Hussein Ali Khan sent eight thousand men under one Zulfikar Beg to drive away Khanderao Dabhade and destroy his block-houses. But the general had neither the skill nor the men to achieve his purpose. Khanderao Dabhade who had between eight thousand and nine thousand veteran troopers and six or seven thousand local levies met Zulfikar Beg near the edge of the Baglan forest. Zulfikar Beg instantly attacked him. The Marathas dispersed on all sides into the wooded hills. Zulfikar Beg divided his army into small parties so as to pursue them. When the Moghuls had penetrated deeply into the mountains, detachments of Marathas closed the paths behind them, Zulfikar Beg was slain and his entire force either killed or taken. Hussein Ali Khan attempted to avenge Zulfikar Beg by sending a large army under his minister Raja Mohkam Singh, to Gujarat. At the same time he sent another force under his own brother Sarfuddin Ali Khan to support him.

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<sup>1</sup> Briggs, *Siyar-ul-Mulakherin*, p. 140.

Khanderao Dabhade was too wary a soldier to fight at a disadvantage. He clung to south Gujarat by means of his chain of forts which the Moghuls failed to take and successfully declined a general engagement. Hussein Ali Khan's ill success against Dabhade was learnt by the emperor with great satisfaction. Farukhsir wrote privately to various Maratha leaders, urging them to make war without respite on his own viceroy. The Maratha leaders were only too willing to comply with the emperor's request and broke the truce that they had more or less observed since Shahu's accession. Everywhere in the Moghul possessions in the south appeared bands of horsemen, who with justice announced that they were acting for the emperor. Hussein Ali Khan had no alternative but to buy off the Marathas on their own terms.

He sent as his ambassador to Shahu's court at Satara a Deshasth Brahman named Shankar Malhar. He had been a clerk under Shivaji and had been appointed *Pant Suchit* by Rajaram, but he had been removed from that office by Tarabai. He had then joined the Moghul service and had acted at the viceregal court as the agent of the Maratha captains in the pay of the emperor. Balaji Vishvanath conducted the negotiations on Shahu's behalf. On his release Shahu had obtained a promise of the *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* in the six Deccan provinces. Subsequently by a private arrangement between Shahu and Daud Khan, the Maratha king had waived his right to the *sardeshmukhi*, provided Daud Khan guaranteed the regular payment of the *chauth*. The first demand, therefore, of the Maratha plenipotentiary was that the viceroy should guarantee the *sardeshmukhi* as well as the *chauth*. This was at once acceded to by Shankar Malhar. But this was only a small part of the Maratha demands. Balaji Vishvanath next asked for sovereign rights over all the territory except Khandesh, which had belonged to Shivaji. In lieu of Khandesh Shahu should receive compensation round Pandharpur. The Moghuls should evacuate Shivner which had twice defied the great king's assaults, restore Shivaji's Carnatic conquests and send Shahu's mother and family back to the Deccan. With special vehemence Balaji, a devout and orthodox Brahman, demanded the surrender of Trimbak. It is a place dear to every Deccan Hindu and is yearly visited by thousands of pilgrims. It was there that the saint Nivratti, brother of Dnyandeo, ended his earthly career. But, above all, it is renowned as the spot where the Godavari river rises. To the Marathas the Godavari is the holiest of all southern streams and by the dwellers on her banks she is usually called Ganga or the Ganges. Indeed a current legend claims for her a holiness even greater than that of her proud northern sister. When King Bhagiratha by his prayers and penances brought down from heaven the divine Ganges, the god Shiva caught her in his hair. There he held her imprisoned for a year. Parvati, Shiva's wife, grew jealous of the stately lady, whom her husband carried always with him. She called to her aid her son, the elephant-headed Ganapati. Now it so happened that near Trimbak a great sage called Gautama had his hermitage and close to it he grew a small patch of corn to gratify his scanty needs. Ganapati turned

himself into a cow and began to eat the hermit's corn. The angered Gautama rushed out and struck the trespasser a violent blow with his staff. Instantly the cow fell down dead. The next year the rains failed and for miles round the peasants ascribed their failure to Gautama's slaughter of the cow. They insisted that by way of reparation he should procure other water and save them from a famine. Gautama, conscious of his guilt, began a series of penances to induce the god Shiva to release from his hair at least a part of the Ganges, to water the arid plains. Shiva at last consented and let fall from his hair the fairest portion of the imprisoned river. It fell at Trimbak and became the Godavari river. The peasants' crops were saved and the Ganges, bereft of her fairest waters, no longer roused the jealousy of the great god's queen.

In return for these vast cessions, Balaji Vishvanath offered on the king's behalf to pay a tribute of ten lakhs for the *chauth* and keep fifteen thousand horse at the disposal of the viceroy of the Deccan. For the *sardeshmukhi* he was to protect the Deccan, to put down disorder and pay a fee of 651 per cent. No loyal Moghul officer would have agreed to a treaty which involved the surrender of Shivaji's Carnatic conquests, but Hussein Ali Khan was ready to accept any terms, by which he might secure fifteen thousand Maratha horse to use against his master the emperor. He therefore agreed to all Balaji's demands subject to confirmation by Farukhsir. But the clause, which was most attractive to Hussein Ali Khan, was utterly repellent to the emperor and his advisers. The treaty was rejected with indignation. Farukhsir sent Jannisar Khan to occupy Khandesh in his name and gave him a body of troops to guard himself from Santaji Kadam Bande, who was overrunning that province. But Jannisar Khan, as soon as the troops reached him, deserted to Hussein Ali Khan. Both Farukhsir and his former allies now prepared for war, but while the Sayad brothers collected men and guns with vigour and resolution, the wretched emperor could not decide on any settled plan. At last a Kashmiri called Mahomed Murad won the imperial favour by suggesting to him a variety of futile designs by which he might destroy the Sayads. In return for this worthless counsel Farukhsir ennobled Mahomed Murad with the title of Itikad Khan. Farukhsirshahi Rukn-ud-daulat, which, being interpreted, means the Confidential Noble of the Court of the Emperor Farukhsir and Pillar of State. At Itikad Khan's advice the emperor recalled Sarbuland Khan, the governor of Patna, Chin Kulich Khan, now ennobled with the title of Nizam-ul-Mulk, or Deputy of the Empire, and governor of Moradabad, and Ajit Singh, the son of Jaswant Singh, maharaja of Jodhpur, whom as a child Aurangzib had wished to detain in Delhi and convert to Islam. After Ajit Singh's successful flight, the maharana of Udaipur, the first of the Rajput princes, had bestowed on him the hand of his daughter; and Bahadur Shah had publicly acknowledged him as chief of Jodhpur. He was now governor of Gujarat. Ajit Singh, however, correctly gauged the emperor's vacillating and treacherous nature and not only refused to help in the destruction of the Sayads, but disclosed to Sayad Abdulla Khan, who

was still at Delhi, Farukhsir's intentions. Nizam-ul-Mulk and Sarbuland Khan had relinquished their high offices when recalled to Delhi, but had been assured that they would be promoted, the one to be vizier, the other to be commander-in-chief. On these terms they were ready to attack the Sayads. But when they asked of the emperor the fulfilment of his promises, they learnt that he intended to make Itikad Khan both vizier and commander-in-chief. They vainly protested that since they had ceased to be governors, they could not help Farukhsir, unless he gave them high posts at Delhi, but they received the reply that Itikad Khan alone had the necessary talents to be head either of the civil or the military administration. Seeing that the emperor was bent on his own destruction, Nizam-ul-Mulk and Sarbuland Khan wisely made their peace with the Sayads. The days of Farukhsir's reign were now numbered. Of all his friends Jai Singh, the raja of Jaipur, alone stood by his side and offered with his Rajput troops to attack and destroy Abdulla Khan before Hussein Ali Khan could join him. But fear now dominated the wretched successor of Aurangzib. Without an effort to resist, he allowed Hussein Ali Khan with the troops of the Deccan and a contingent of ten thousand Maratha horse under Balaji Vishvanath to march on Delhi and join Abdulla Khan. The emperor was lost. He tried in vain to conciliate the brothers, but they had gone too far for pardon. They replaced his guards by their own soldiers and insolently repeated to Farukhsir's face the various orders which he had given to compass their destruction. The emperor lost his temper and broke into passionate reproaches. The Sayads at once seized his person. A few nobles, touched by their master's fall, tried to rescue him, but in vain. The attempt ended in a street riot, during which the mob fell on the Maratha contingent and killed fifteen hundred of them, including Santaji Bhosle, a son of Parsoji Bhosle, and Balaji Mahadev, one of the three Bhanu brothers.<sup>1</sup> When the Sayads had restored order, they had their unhappy master blinded and thrown into a gloomy dungeon where he soon afterwards died (February 1719). Nizam-ul-Mulk and Sarbuland Khan were rewarded for their inaction, the former by the governorship of Malwa, the latter by the governorship of Kabul.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### NIZAM-UL-MULK FOUNDS THE KINGDOM OF HYDERABAD

A.D. 1719 TO 1724

THE body of the deceased emperor was buried in the tomb of Humayun, the spot where lie the remains of the murdered Dara Shukoh and where many years later the heirs of the last Moghul emperor sought in vain a sanctuary. In his place the Sayad brothers seated

<sup>1</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar. Siyar-ul-Mutakherin. Khafi Khan.*

on the throne one Rafiud Dayat, the son of one of prince Akbar Mahomed's daughters and therefore the great-grandson of Aurangzib. The emperor was only twenty years of age, but he was already stricken with a mortal sickness. He was suffering from consumption, and three months after his coronation, he followed Farukhsir to the grave. At the dying boy's request, his brother Rafiud Daulat was crowned in his stead; but a victim to the same pitiless malady, he also exchanged in three months' time the throne for a grave. During the reign of these two princes the Sayads were masters of the empire. Abdulla Khan selected for his own zenana the favourite beauties of Farukhsir, and the Musulman chroniclers relate as a symptom<sup>1</sup> of the decay of the empire, that Maharaja Ajit Singh took back the daughter whom he had given in wedlock to the late emperor, and reconverting her to Hinduism, sent her to his own palace at Jodhpur. The next prince whom the Sayads seated on the throne was Roshan Akhtar, the son of Jehandar Shah. In September 1719 he became under the title of Mahomed Shah, emperor of Delhi.

During the reigns of the two puppet predecessors of Mahomed Shah, Balaji Vishvanath and his Maratha contingent remained at Delhi. Balaji demanded imperiously the confirmation of Hussein Ali Khan's draft treaty. The latter, however, no longer in need of Maratha help postponed its execution and did not obtain the imperial signature until after Mahomed Shah's coronation. In some particulars the signed treaty differed from the original draft, but in essentials it remained the same. Shahu's mother Yesubai and his family were restored to him. He received the grant both of *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* over the six Deccan provinces. In addition he was granted the *babti*, or 25 per cent of the balance of their revenue, the *sahotra*, or six per cent of the whole of the revenue, and the *nargaunda*, or three per cent of the whole. He received most of the territory which he had demanded, but not Trimbak, nor the conquests south of the Wardha and Tungabhadra rivers. On the other hand, he acquired the line of forts from Tathavda to Machendragad with their districts as far east as Pandharpur together with Akalkot and Indapur, Aurangzib's wedding gift.<sup>2</sup> The emperor defrayed in full the expenses of the Maratha contingent while under arms. Having satisfactorily concluded this treaty, alike advantageous to his king and disgraceful to the empire, Balaji Vishvanath returned to Shahu's court at Satara. There the gratified monarch gave him in fief the fort of Lohgad and the adjoining districts.

Mahomed Shah was as destitute of talents as his immediate forerunners, but his mother was a woman of ability and courage. She forced her son to pay every respect to the Sayad brothers who had raised him to the throne, while she herself sought for some counterpoise to their outrageous power. In Nizam-ul-Mulk she saw a capable and willing friend. He had never allied himself to the Sayads and as a rough soldier he heeded but little their claims to a descent from the Prophet. Indeed but for Farukhsir's vacillation he would willingly

<sup>1</sup> *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin*.

<sup>2</sup> Grant Duff,

have destroyed them. He now entered readily into a plan for their discomfiture. He first established himself firmly in his governorship of Malwa, and having reduced that province to obedience, he resolved to make himself master of the Deccan. He knew a good deal about Deccan warfare and had in 1713 and 1714, when viceroy for a short time, protected it with success against Maratha encroachments. His daring mind conceived the plan of using the resources of that province, which others regarded as nearly lost to the empire, to oust the Sayads' dominion. He assembled twelve thousand veteran horse at Sironj and then without warning crossed the Narbada and marched southwards. The Sayads, who had expected him to march on Delhi, were dismayed by this unexpected move. The rebel's march was at first a triumphant progress. The giant fortress of A'rgad, which had for many years withstood the arms of Akbar, surrendered on payment of two years' arrears of pay. Burhanpur capitulated on the same terms. Anwar Khan, the governor of Khandesh, at once handed over his charge. Rao Rambha Nimbalkar, Chandrasen Jadhav and other Maratha leaders, discontented with Shahu, and a contingent from Kolhapur presented themselves at Nizam-ul-Mulk's camp. Lastly, Ghaus Khan, the governor of Berar and a Turk like the Nizam himself, brought to his fellow-countryman a body of veteran troops and a train of artillery. The Nizam's head was not turned by these easy successes. He knew that he would soon have to face Alam Ali Khan, a nephew of the Sayads and for the moment viceroy of the Deccan. To Alam Ali Khan's help, too, were marching Dilavar Khan, a Sayad like the two brothers, and a Maratha contingent under Khanderao Dabhade. The Nizam, however, had the advantage of interior lines and he resolved to destroy his enemies before they could unite. His tactics were those which he had learnt in Deccan warfare.<sup>1</sup> On the approach of Dilavar Khan, the Nizam left on the wooded banks of a stream his lieutenant Inayat Khan, with a picked body of infantry and a large train of artillery. With the bulk of his force he went out to meet Dilavar Khan. The latter, thinking that he had before him the entire army of his enemy, charged impetuously. The Nizam skilfully retreated until he had led Dilavar Khan close to his concealed reserves. While the Sayad was pursuing his foe in the disorder of fancied victory, there burst on him and his men a storm of cannon shot. Dilavar Khan's soldiers fell in heaps and the rest, taking advantage of the smoke, fled in dismay from the battle (June 19, 1720).<sup>2</sup>

In the meantime Alam Ali Khan had reached Aurangabad. He had effected a junction with the Maratha contingent under Khanderao Dabhade and with twelve thousand Marathas and his own army of thirteen thousand men he thought himself a match for Nizam-ul-Mulk. The latter feared most the Maratha contingent. Against them he resolved to rely on massed batteries of heavy artillery, a device used afterwards with still greater effect by the French general, de Bussy.

<sup>1</sup> *Khaft Khan and Siyar-ul-Mutakherin*

<sup>2</sup> This battle is known as the battle of Khandva. The battle against Alam Ali Khan was called the battle of Balapur.

He stripped Asirgad and Burhanpur of their cannon and then sought his enemy. Khanderao Dabhade and his Marathas behaved in a way worthy of his high reputation. But Ghaus Khan kept them at a distance with the fire of his batteries and charged them in the field with the squadrons under Chandrasen Jadhav. The main action took place at a spot called Balapur in Berar, almost half-way between Burhanpur and Aurangabad. The Nizam's tactics were similar to those of his recent victory, but more artfully concealed. In the evening before the battle he ostentatiously massed his entire artillery in front of his lines. At night he withdrew the bulk of his guns and hid them in a copse a mile or two in the rear. Next morning August 10, 1720, Alam Ali Khan attacked with the same fury as Dilavar Khan had done and fell into the same snare. Nizam-ul-Mulk slowly retreated, followed by Alam Ali Khan. When the deluded commander had reached the desired spot, the concealed batteries in a few minutes swept away his troops by thousands. Profiting by their disorder Nizam-ul-Mulk counter-attacked. The Maratha contingent fought bravely until Alam Khan's death, when Khanderao Dabhade, seeing that the day was lost, withdrew his detachment safely to the Deccan. Among the fallen was Shankar Malhar, Hussein Ali Khan's envoy to the court of King Shahu.

The rebel's victories were heard with dismay by the Sayad brothers, but with secret joy by the emperor and his mother, and they deemed the time propitious for ridding themselves of their overbearing benefactors. To this end they won over another Turk named Mahomed Amir Khan, who had deserted Farukhsir to the Sayads and now that the Sayad cause seemed to totter, was ready to desert back from the Sayads to the emperor. The suspicious brothers forbade any private interviews, but Amir Khan and Mahomed Shah conveyed to each other their plans by speaking openly in Turki, a language unknown to the Sayads, but always diligently studied by the house of Babar. As Hussein Ali Khan was the abler of the brothers, it was decided to remove him by assassination, and in one Mir Haidar, a Chagatai Moghul, was found a suitable instrument. The assassin pretended to offer Hussein Ali Khan a petition written in extremely obscure language. Hussein Ali Khan accepted it and while he tried to unravel the tangled rigmarole, Mir Haidar plunged a dagger into his heart. On the death of their leader the bulk of his troops deserted and the rest were overpowered by the nobles attached to the imperial cause. Abdulla Khan still remained to be dealt with. He was at Fatehpur Sikri, the beautiful city which Akbar built near Agra and afterwards abandoned. On hearing of his brother's murder he at once marched on Delhi. To give his advance a show of right, he had crowned another grandson of Bahadur Shah under the title of Mahomed Ibrahim Shah. But the nobles of Delhi were weary of the overweening insolence of the Sayads and gathered round the reigning emperor. Nevertheless Abdulla Khan was able to collect a considerable force; and at Shahpur on the road from Agra to Delhi he fought for two days a hardly contested action. On the second day he rashly dismounted from his elephant to encourage his men; but, receiving



several wounds, he was taken prisoner and his army dispersed (November 1720) <sup>1</sup>

Mahomed Shah returned to Delhi in triumph. He at first appointed Mahomed Amir Khan as his vizier. But on his death a few hours later, he gave that important post to Nizam-ul-Mulk. Thus in a few months the rebel had not only conquered the Deccan, but had raised himself to the first office in the empire. In addition he was allowed to retain the governorship of Malwa and the viceroyalty of the Deccan. Although Mahomed Shah put up a bell in his apartments, the chain of which any aggrieved subject might pull, he was really as idle and dissolute as any of his predecessors. When the new vizier reached Delhi in January 1722, he found the imperial affairs in utter confusion. He at once applied to their study his keen and powerful mind. But serious and decorous himself, he could neither understand nor sympathize with the emperor's youthful levity. He constantly rebuked his sovereign in grave and, worse still, lengthy speeches. At last Mahomed Shah, tired to death of his solemn vizier, encouraged his courtiers and boon companions to mimic the Turk's manners and pull faces at him behind his back. When ridicule failed, Mahomed Shah thought to destroy his vizier by appointing him governor of Gujarat. The previous governor was one Haidar Kuli Khan, to whom the emperor sent a despatch, urging him to resist and, if possible, to kill the new nominee. Haidar Kuli Khan readily obeyed. But the Nizam was more than a match for his treacherous master. Marching into Gujarat he contrived so skilfully to sow sedition in Haidar Kuli Khan's army, that at a given moment it deserted in a mass to the enemy. The wretched governor left with only a few personal friends, saved his life by pretending to be mad, and fled to Delhi. He was followed there by Nizam-ul-Mulk, who once more undertook his duties as vizier, with the added prestige of his recent victory and a third viceroyalty. His return was so distasteful to the foolish boy who occupied the throne that Nizam-ul-Mulk began to fear that if he stayed long at Delhi he would, like Hussein Ali Khan, be removed by the knife of an assassin. He begged leave to resign his office as vizier and go to his governorships of Malwa, Gujarat and the Deccan, where, as he pleaded, the fresh inroads of the Marathas demanded his immediate return. With a sigh of relief, Mahomed Shah graciously granted his request and lavished honours on the departing minister. Nizam-ul-Mulk was given the title of Asaf Jah and Wakil-i-Mulk, or Agent-General of the Empire, and permitted to leave court with every wish for his future success.

The Nizam went first to Malwa and thence after a short interval to the Deccan. But his master's enmity preceded him. An imperial messenger had already reached Mubarez Khan, the commandant of Hyderabad fort, begging him to destroy the viceroy and assume the viceroyalty himself. Tempted by the offer, Mubarez Khan won over a number of the leading Musulman officers and raised an army big enough to encourage him to attack the emperor's enemy. On October

<sup>1</sup> Briggs, *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin*.

2, 1724, the rivals met at Shakar Khera in Berar, eighty miles from Aurangabad<sup>1</sup>. Mubariz Khan tried to outmarch the Nizam and, turning his flank, to seize Aurangabad. But he was opposed to a master of the art of war. Nizam-ul-Mulk marched even more rapidly than he did and forced him to action. In spite of the personal bravery of Mubariz Khan, he was killed and his army overthrown. Nizam-ul-Mulk knew as well as anyone the emperor's perfidy, but he thought fit to ignore it. With grim irony he congratulated Mahomed Shah on the reduction of a rebel and sent his head and his personal effects to increase the imperial gratification. Henceforward, although Nizam-ul-Mulk feigned a subject's deference to the emperor, and styled himself his lieutenant, he ruled in reality as king of the Deccan.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### THE DEATH OF BALAJI VISHVANATH AND THE ACCESSION OF HIS SON BAJIRAO

A D 1720 TO 1730

BEFORE leaving Delhi, Nizam-ul-Mulk had appointed his uncle Hamid Khan as his lieutenant in Gujarat. Mahomed Shah was advised to release from prison Abdulla Khan and send him to reconquer that province first and the Deccan afterwards. This plan was frustrated by Nizam-ul-Mulk's friends, who successfully administered to the fallen vizier a dose of poison. The emperor then chose Sarbuland Khan, the governor of Kabul, as his instrument. The latter, however, who aspired to be vizier, did not at once proceed to Gujarat, but sent there one Shujaat Khan with a body of picked troops. Hamid Khan's own force was not equal to resistance, so he fell back on Dohad, where he induced a Maratha leader Kantaji Kadam Bande to join him, promising him in return the *chauth* of Gujarat. The allies advanced against Shujaat Khan and, defeating and killing him at Kapadwanj, entered Ahmadabad in triumph. It so happened, however, that Rustam Ali Khan, the Moghul governor of Surat, was Shujaat Khan's brother. He took up arms to avenge him and following his enemy's example induced another Maratha leader named Pilaji Gaikvad, with whom he had for some time past been conducting a more or less successful guerilla warfare, to patch up a truce and join him against Hamid Khan and Kantaji Bande. This Pilaji Gaikvad was the founder of the great house of Baroda; and since English historians, as a rule, interpret wrongly the name Gaikvad to mean cowherd, it will not be out of place to narrate here the origin of the family. The word Gaikvad is made up of two Marathi words—*gai* a cow, and *kavad* a small door. *Gaikvad* therefore means a 'cow's door'. The family came to adopt the name in this way.

<sup>1</sup> *Khafi Khan*. (The place is now known as Sakhar Khed.)

Nandaji,<sup>1</sup> the great grand-father of Pilaji Gaikwad, was in charge of Bher fort in that part of the Mawal tract which, watered by the Pavana river in the Bhor state, is known as the Pavana Mawal. One day a Musulman butcher drove past the fort gates a herd of cows, intending at the close of his journey to convert them into beef. Nandaji, like a virtuous Hindu, rushed out and rescued the cows, which ran for shelter into the fort through a side door or *kavad*. Proud of this meritorious feat, Nandaji assumed the name of Gaikavad, or Cow's Door, which has since been corrupted into Gaikwad. Nandaji had a son Keroji, and Keroji had four sons Damaji, Lingoji, Gujoji and Harjirao. Damaji took service under Khanderao Dabhade and so distinguished himself in the battle of Balapur that his conduct was brought to the royal notice. Damaji had no son, but he adopted Pilaji, the son of one of his brothers, and obtained for him a small post in Khanderao Dabhade's household. Shortly after his appointment Pilaji, who was an efficient horse-master, was put in charge of some forty or fifty mares which had become too thin to carry Khanderao Dabhade's troopers. He took the mares to Narayanpur in the Nawapur pargana of Gujarat, where they shortly recovered their condition. Dabhade then gave him two or three hundred other foundered horses, which also recovered health and strength; indeed Pilaji not only sent them back in excellent condition, but he also returned a part of the money given to him for their keep. As a reward Dabhade promoted Pilaji to the command of a squadron with which to garrison Nawapur. This pargana and the neighbouring districts were then in the hands of the Bades and the Pawars, also subordinates of the commander-in-chief. They affected to believe that Dabhade had made a mistake and refused to hand over to Pilaji his new grant. To compensate him, Dabhade gave him the command of two more squadrons and allowed him to establish himself at a fort near Surat, to which Pilaji gave the name of Songadh, or the Golden Stronghold. He was now at the head of a considerable division and, flattered by Rustam Ali's offer, agreed to serve under his command. An indecisive action was fought by the two opposing Moghuls on the banks of the Mahi river. Rustam Ali remained master of the field. But Hamid Khan, worsted in battle, proved more formidable in intrigue. He induced his Maratha ally Bande to win over Pilaji. The next day Hamid Khan renewed the battle. Pilaji Gaikwad obtained leave to guard the guns and baggage while Rustam Ali charged the enemy. Away went the glittering masses of the imperial horse. Pilaji Gaikwad instantly spiked his commander's guns and charged into his rear. Attacked on all sides, Rustam Ali's force was destroyed and the too trusting generals fell on the battlefield.<sup>2</sup> In consideration of Pilaji's timely treachery, Hamid Khan divided the *chauch* of Gujarat between him and Kantaji Bande. The two Marathas quarrelled over the division, but in the end they accepted Hamid Khan's ruling that the

<sup>1</sup> *Pilaji Gaikwad Bahar* placed at my disposal by the courtesy of H. H. the Maharaja Gaikwad of Baroda.

<sup>2</sup> *Khat Khan and Siyar-ul-Mutakherin.*

*chauth* of eastern Gujarat should go to Pilaji and that of western Gujarat to Kantaji. The Mahi river was declared to be the boundary between them. After this settlement Hamid Khan returned in triumph to Ahmadabad and made his headquarters in the Shahi Bagh, now the residence of the British commissioner. His triumph, however, was short-lived. Sarbuland Khan, feeling that if he tarried longer at Delhi he might lose everything, determined to go to Gujarat himself and drive out the deputy of Nizam-ul-Mulk. He succeeded in forcing his way into Ahmadabad, but there he was besieged by thirty thousand Marathas and compelled to give them drafts for large amounts on the chief bankers of Gujarat. The Maratha leaders, armed with Sarbuland Khan's authority, extorted vast sums of money from the rich men of the province, with the result that trade and capital alike deserted it. Still, had Sarbuland Khan been properly supported by the emperor, it is possible that he might have restored the Moghul authority over Gujarat. He won an important success over the Marathas on the plains of Cambay, whereupon Hamid Ali Khan fled back to the Deccan (December 1725). But the victory did Sarbuland Khan more harm than a defeat. Till then he had every month received five lakhs from the imperial treasury. But the news of his success and Hamid Khan's flight aroused the jealousy of the emperor and of his new vizier, Khan Dauran. They at once stopped the monthly payment and left Sarbuland Khan to shift for himself. The result was as might have been expected. Unable through the hostility of the Marathas to carry on the government, he bought their friendship, as will be narrated later, by formally ceding to them in 1729 the *chauth* and the *sa.leshmukhi* of Gujarat.

While the foregoing events were happening in the Deccan and Gujarat, three of the greatest Maratha leaders passed away, Parashuram Trimbak, Balaji Vishvanath and Khanderao Dabhade. Parashuram died on May 27, 1718, leaving four sons Krishnarao, Shrinivas better known as Shripatrao, Sadashiv and Jagjivan. Shripatrao had been adopted into the family of Parashuram's brother Madhavrao and was, therefore, no longer Parashuram's heir. Nevertheless Shahu, who had for Shripatrao a warm affection, appointed him to his natural father's office. Krishnarao remained at Kolhapur. His descendant is the chief of Vishalgad, who is still styled the *Pratinidhi* by H. H. the Maharaja of Kolhapur. Besides his sons, Parashuram left two daughters. One married into the family of Dhugardare, the other into that of the Deshpandes of Kulevadi, where her descendants may still be met. A *vindavan*, or raised stand, for the sacred *tulsi* plant was erected in his father's honour by Shripatrao and may yet be seen at Mahuli on the banks of the holy Kistna. A not less enduring monument is the collection of Sanskrit and Marathi verse which the soldier and statesman wrote in Satara fort, to beguile the tedium of his imprisonment.

Balaji Vishvanath died shortly after his return southwards. The fatigues of the journey, the anxieties of his stay, his vast labours to obtain the confirmation of the treaty drafted by Hussein Ali Khan had exhausted even his enduring frame. Early in October 1720 he felt

himself unable to carry on even the ordinary duties of his charge and obtained leave to retire to Saswad, the little town below Purandar. During the winter and summer his family lived in Purandar, but to avoid the damp cold of the monsoon months it was their habit to descend into the valley below. In his house at Saswad, surrounded by his family, the great Peshwa tried to regain his strength, and on March 11, 1720, he married his son Bajirao to the charming Kashibai but the hand of death was already on him. On April 1, 1720, after a few days' illness he died of heart failure. It is a great misfortune that more has not come down to us of this distinguished man. Much has survived to us of his son Bajirao's life and character. Yet although Balaji's exploits were less brilliant than those of his more famous son, it must be borne in mind that the latter began where the former ended. The success which attended Bajirao was, in truth, the success of Balaji's prudent and far-seeing policy. It must be conceded that in the granting of lands instead of salaries to the king's officers, Balaji departed from the wise rule of Shivaji. But the fault was not the minister's but his master's. Balaji saw that Shahu had not the commanding talents and energy which had made possible the great king's concentrated dominion. Since the best was not obtainable, Balaji chose the second best and substituted for the autocracy of the king the Maratha confederacy. Such a confederacy had the seeds of weakness. Nevertheless, as Ranade has observed, it made its power felt all over India and endured for more than a hundred years. Again it was to Balaji that the complicated Maratha system of collection was due. To it as much as to their victories in the field the Marathas owed the spread of their empire. Everywhere were scattered their agents, collectors and *kamavisdars*, their *gumastas* and *sheristedars*, who by constant interference with the Moghul officials undermined their authority, hampered their finances, fomented their quarrels and furnished to the Satara government a never-failing excuse for hostilities. As a child Balaji had married Radhabai Barve, a lady of extraordinary accomplishments. In an age when few men were literate, this talented lady could both read and write. She ruled her household with a rod of iron. Yet in social matters she was large-minded and tolerant. At one time it came to light that a certain Brahman *sardar* owned a slave girl of the Mhar caste. The stricter citizens would have excommunicated the offender. But Radhabai induced the king to impose instead of a sentence of excommunication a trifling penance. Balaji's eldest son was Visaji, better known as Bajirao, born in 1698. His second son was Antaji, better known as Chimmaji Appa, born in 1708. He left also two daughters. One of them, Anubai, married Vyankatrao, the founder of the house of Ichalkaranji. The other, Bhubai, became the bride of Abaji Joshi of Baramati, the brother of Balaji Naik, a wealthy money-lender and known to fame as Bajirao's most harassing creditor.

The third great Maratha chief to die was Khanderao Dabhade. In every campaign, nay in almost every battle fought by the Marathas since the death of Shivaji, he had played his part. In his last great

fight, that of Balapur, he was in no way responsible for defeat; and his courage in the field and his skilful retreat enhanced rather than lowered his reputation. But on his return to the Deccan, he felt himself no longer fit for service and asked for and obtained leave to retire. He had won wide possessions in the rich plains of Gujarat, but like a true Maratha he preferred to them all the little Deccan village which had seen his birth. To Talegaon Dabhade, as it is still called, on the banks of the Indrayani river, the war-worn soldier went. Two picturesque lakes surrounded by shady trees adjoin the village and provide it with a never-failing supply of water. The neighbouring hills furnish it with a beautiful and ever-changing landscape. The summer is not more severe than that of southern France. The winter is as bracing as that of Algeciras or Sicily, and if the rainfall is unduly heavy, the temperature is never high and the air is always cool and pleasant. But neither climate nor scenery could restore the old warrior's exhausted frame. For some months previously he had suffered from gravel, and he lived only long enough to see his own title of Sena Khas Khel transferred to his son Trimbakrao and to receive the assurance that Trimbakrao would also on his father's death succeed to the post of commander-in-chief (May 1721).<sup>1</sup>

It was at one time commonly believed that Bajirao's accession to his father's office was delayed until the same month as Trimbakrao's appointment to the commandership-in-chief. For some time previous to Balaji Vishvanath's death there had begun to form what for convenience' sake may be called the 'Deccan Party'—a combination of Deshasth, or Deccan, Brahmans and Marathas against Balaji Vishvanath and his Chitpavan, or Konkan, fellow-castemen. The most formidable leader of the Deccan Party was Shripatrao, the son of Parashuram Trimbak. To him was joined Fatesing Bhosle, the child whom Shahu had adopted after the capture of Parad village. On Balaji's death Shahu had announced to his council that he meant to appoint Bajirao in his father's place. Shripatrao artfully urged the king to be in no hurry. Let the king wait and judge for himself whether the young man's abilities were equal to the exalted post. Bajirao, born in 1698, was now twenty-two years old.<sup>2</sup> He was no scholar, such as were his father and his own descendants, for his childhood and youth had been spent in camps and on the battlefield. But he had a wide knowledge of men and a spirit and courage equal to the most arduous tasks. He was a bold rider, a skilful archer, a practised swordsman. In Hingangaon he had shared his father's captivity and at Delhi his father's triumphs. On Balaji's return, he had sent Bajirao to command the Maratha field force in Khandesh. Shahu, who was a shrewd judge of character, overruled his favourite's objections.<sup>3</sup> On April 17, at a spot called Masur near Karhad he invested Bajirao with the robes of first minister. At the same time he gave to Bajirao's younger brother Chimnaji Appa, then only twelve years old, the

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff. Sardesai gives the date of Khanderao Dabhade's death as 1729.

<sup>2</sup> *Riyasat*, Vol. II., p. 143.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 163.

title of Pandit and the *saranjam*, or private estate, which had once belonged to Damaji Thorat

In no long time the new Peshwa outlined his future policy. He would leave the narrow limits of the Deccan and carry Maratha arms into the very heart of the Moghul empire. The first goal should be the conquest of central India. This adventurous plan the Deccan Party strongly opposed. In the council chamber Shripatrao the *Pratimdh* urged with great force its rejection as rash and imprudent. He drew a just picture of the disorganization of the finances, of the disordered state of the Konkan, where the Sidis held many important towns. Instead of bringing on their country such another invasion as that of Aurangzib, led this time by a soldier as skilled as Nizam-ul-Mulk, let the Marathas consolidate their conquests. Their independence had been recognized. It was far better to avoid a rupture with Delhi or Aurangabad. At peace with their neighbours, let them convert their present possessions into a wealthy and powerful kingdom. That aim achieved, let them devote themselves to conquest nearer home. The Moghuls had overrun Shivaji's southern conquests. Let the Marathas retake Jinji and all its fertile districts and the provinces torn by the great king from Bijapur. This second ambition realized, it would be time enough to set in motion their armies against Delhi.

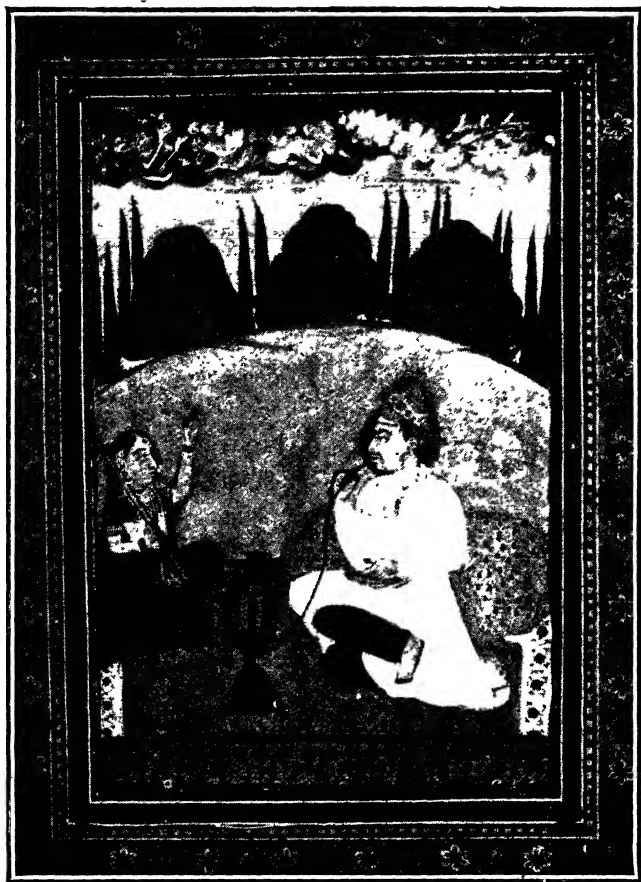
Bajirao replied that the way to restore their finances was to plunder the rich provinces of Hindustan and not to waste their strength and treasure in the barren plains of the Deccan. He drew a vivid picture of the deeds of Shivaji, who with far less resources had defied the Moghul empire in its heyday. He excited Shahu's cupidity by dwelling on the indolence, the imbecility, and above all, on the wealth of the Moghuls, and he stimulated his religious zeal by urging him to drive from the holy land of Bharatvarsha the outcast and the barbarian. The orator's reasoning might have been wasted, but for his transcendent personal qualities. The commanding stature, which all but reached the low ceiling of the royal palace, the rich, clear voice, the bold virile features, the dark, imperious eyes that forced attention, and above all, the rare felicity of diction that for centuries has been the peculiar gift of the Chitpavan Brahman, produced an irresistible effect. At the close of a lofty peroration, the minister fixed on Shahu his glowing gaze and said

Strike, strike at the trunk and the branches will fall of themselves.  
Listen but to my counsel and I shall plant the Maratha banner  
on the walls of Attock

Rhetoric succeeded where argument might have failed. Shahu, completely carried away, cried with blazing eyes, 'By heaven! You shall plant it on the throne of the Almighty!'<sup>1</sup>

It was, however, some time before Bajirao could fulfil his dazzling promises. The finances had to be put in order, troops raised and the

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff. The learned author has wrongly translated 'Kinnar Khand'. The phrase in Shahu's mouth did not mean the country beyond the Himalayas, but the celestial regions.



BAJIRAO I





royal authority strengthened. In 1724, however, he felt strong enough to invade Malwa. This province, as it will be remembered, had been bestowed on Nizam-ul-Mulk. But on the latter's invasion of the Deccan the emperor dismissed him from the governorship of Malwa and conferred it on Raja Giridhar. The latter was able, since Nizam-ul-Mulk had drained the province of his troops to conquer the Deccan, to win it back with little difficulty to the imperial cause. To resist the Maratha leader was a harder task. Bajirao swept like a whirlwind through central India. Then leaving it, he appointed as King Shahu's agents Udaji Pawar, Malharrao Holkar and Ranoji Sindia. The first of these was the founder of the house of Dhar, the second was the founder of the state of Indore, and the third the ancestor of the Maharajas of Gwalior.

Malharrao Holkar was of lowly origin. His ancestors were *dhangars*, or herdsmen, by caste and first lived in the village of Waphgaon. Afterwards they moved to Hol on the banks of the Nira, forty miles from Poona and within the limits of the Phaltan state. Their original name was Virkar, but this they changed to Holkar as a result of their new residence. Malharrao's father was one Khandoji Holkar who held in Hol the office of *chaugula* or *chaudhari*, a superior village servant. He became the father of a baby boy, to whom he gave the name of Malhari. When the boy was only three years old, Khandoji Holkar died. To save her baby from the malice of his father's brothers, his mother Jiwai took him with her to her own village of Talode in Khandesh. There Malhari or Malharrao as he now came to be called, was brought up by his mother's brother Bhojraj, who was in command of a troop of irregular horse under Kantaji Kadam Bande. One day when still a child he went to sleep in the shade of a tree. As he slept, so the story runs, the sun moved and its rays fell upon the unconscious boy. When his mother came to fetch him home, she saw a large cobra protecting his face, with its hood expanded. She called her brother to witness this strange spectacle and both agreed that it foretold the boy's future greatness.<sup>1</sup> Not long afterwards Bhojraj had a vision of the goddess Lakshmi, who told him that his nephew was destined to be a king. Convinced by these two events that Malharrao was reserved for something better than a herdsman's life, Bhojraj enlisted him as a trooper and gave him in marriage his own daughter Gautamabai. Malharrao's courage soon brought him rewards, but he once nearly ended his career by striking in the face Balaji Vishvanath's son Bajirao with a clod of earth, because the latter objected to his cutting the peasant's corn to feed his horses. Bajirao was generous enough to ask his father to spare the rough soldier. This generosity Holkar did not forget. After the battle of Balapur (1720), in which he greatly distinguished himself, he smoothed over a quarrel between Kantaji Kadam Bande and Bajirao. This pleased the young Peshwa so much that in 1725 he gave Holkar a command of 500 horse in his own service and became greatly attached to him.

<sup>1</sup> *Atre, Holkar Charitra*, p. 12,

Ranoji Sindia came of an ancient Kshatriya family of which the original name was Sendrak. They rose to the royal notice in the time of the Bahmani kings and their name was corrupted into Shinde, a word which the English have further corrupted into Sindia. They became *patils*, or herdsmen, of the village of Kanherkhed, about twelve miles from Satara. In Aurangzib's time they held commands in his army and the emperor married to Shahu, while in captivity, Savitrabai, the daughter of a Sindia in his service. On Aurangzib's death Savitrabai's father fell fighting for Azam Shah. Ranoji Sindia was a scion of a younger branch. His father was in Balaji Vishvanath's service and he himself was brought up as a playmate of Bajirao. When Bajirao grew up, he made Ranoji his orderly and it was Ranoji's duty to carry his master's slippers. One day Bajirao found his orderly asleep, but in his slumber Ranoji still held fast the Peshwa's slippers. Bajirao promoted him, believing that one who was so faithful in small things would prove no less faithful in great ones.

The family of Pawar claimed descent from the Parmar Rajputs, whose house, according to the legends of Malwa, ruled over that country for a thousand and fifty-eight years. Krishnaji Pawar distinguished himself under Shivaji and his son Babaji won the title of Vishvasrao from Rajaram at Jinji. He had two grandsons Sambhaji and Kalaji who both served in the royal armies. Sambhaji's three sons were Udaji, Anandrao and Jagdev.<sup>1</sup>

By the year 1726, however, Nizam-ul-Mulk, rid of the enemies launched against him by the emperor, began to feel himself strong enough to oppose the pretensions of Shahu and his minister. In this he was encouraged by Chandrasen Jadhav who hated his former master with the fury of a renegade. Nor was ample ground lacking for a renewal of hostilities. Since his arrival in the Deccan in 1720 the Nizam had been trying continuously to spread his dominion to the farthest limits of southern India. Early in 1723 he seized the town of Trichinopoly from Sarphoji, the son of Shivaji's brother Vyankoji and the ruler of Tanjore. Sarphoji appealed to Shahu. In 1727 Shahu sent to Sarphoji's help a large army under Fatehsing Bhosle, who was deemed to have special interests in the Carnatic. Under Fatehsing Bhosle went Bajirao and the *Pratimdh*, Shripatrao. The Marathas exacted arrears of tribute from the chiefs of Bednore, Gadag and Shrirangpatan, better known by its English name of Seringapatam. But owing to the ill feeling of the *Pratimdh* towards Bajirao and the indifference of Fatehsing Bhosle to his soldiers' welfare, the Maratha losses were extremely heavy and the Nizam soon regained most of the territory that Shahu had taken.

The Nizam's plan to humble Shahu was a subtle one. He first withdrew his headquarters from Aurangabad to Hyderabad and won the *Pratimdh*'s good will by offering him a *jaghire* in Berar, as an equivalent for the *chauth* payable on his new capital. Bajirao indignantly protested, but in vain. Shahu, who did not penetrate the schemes of his powerful neighbour, was induced by the *Pratimdh* to

<sup>1</sup> Malcolm, *Central India*, chap. iv.

approve the exchange, since, so he said, the Nizam would feel deeply the payment of tribute on his metropolis. Encouraged by this success, the Nizam next affected ignorance of the respective claims of Shahu and Rajaram's son Sambhaji. He declared himself unable to pay to the Maratha government its *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* until the matter had been settled. At the same time he removed Shahu's agents from his dominions and invited both Shahu and Sambhaji to send envoys to Hyderabad, where he would himself decide which of the two princes had the better right to the crown of the Marathas. The *Pratimdhī*, blinded by his hatred for Bajirao, urged his sovereign to comply. But the Peshwa laughed his rival to scorn and so worked on Shahu's feelings that the king instantly declared war. The Nizam successfully invoked the aid of Sambhaji. The latter joined the Nizam's camp with a large Maratha force and the Nizam flattered himself that he would be able to destroy the power of the Marathas, forcing them into a civil war, which would never, if his efforts availed anything, be ended. But he had counted without the genius of Bajirao. That aspiring statesman soon showed himself as great in the field as he had been eloquent in the council chamber. On August 7, 1727, while rain was still falling, Bajirao led his army into the field. Entering the Aurangabad district, he first plundered Jalna and the districts round it. The Nizam sent a force under Ewaz Khan to meet him. After an indecisive action, the Peshwa outmarched his opponent and reached Mahul. Again turning towards Aurangabad, he gave out that he meant to plunder Burhanpur. To protect the wealthy city, the Nizam hastened to join Ewaz Khan. But Bajirao had already left Khandesh and, plundering as he went, had entered Gujarat and had informed Sarbuland Khan with grim humour that he was invading the province under the Nizam's orders. The latter, furious at being outwitted, marched with his whole strength on Poona. Bajirao, whose plan was to exhaust the Nizam's soldiers before he attacked them, left Gujarat and again invaded his enemy's dominions along the banks of the Godavari. The Nizam abandoned his plan of marching on Poona and went eastwards so rapidly that he crossed the Godavari lower down and waited for Bajirao astride the river. The Nizam's cavalry was now tired out, so Bajirao no longer fled before him. Retreating slowly Bajirao tempted the Moghuls to follow him away from the river into the hilly country near the town of Palkhed<sup>1</sup>. He then took the offensive and soon forced the Nizam to take post. Thereupon Bajirao completely surrounded him and but for the Nizam's heavy artillery, he would soon have been compelled to surrender together with Sambhaji. The Nizam's big guns saved him. Forcing his way by the fire of his massed batteries through the investing force, he succeeded in reaching the Godavari river near the town of Mungi Shevgaon. He had now water and a considerable store of provisions. Nevertheless his was a besieged force and he sent his lieutenant Ewaz Khan to open negotiations. Bajirao demanded the immediate surrender of Sambhaji, the payment of all arrears of *chauth* and

<sup>1</sup> The battle is known as the battle of Palkhed.

*sardeshmukhi*, the reinstatement of the Maratha revenue officers, the recognition of Shahu as sole king of the Marathas and the grant of a substantial *jaghire* to Bajirao. The Nizam honourably refused to surrender Sambhaji, but he agreed to the remaining conditions. Eventually it was settled that the Nizam should send Sambhaji with his force to Panhala and that thereafter Shahu should be at liberty to take such action against him as he might deem necessary. This treaty known as the treaty of Mungi Shevgaon was signed on March 6, 1728. The document executed, Bajirao allowed the Nizam to retire to his own dominions and turned his attention to Gujarat where Sarbuland Khan, deserted by the emperor and by the vizier, Khan Dauran, was anxious to come to terms with the Marathas. Pilaji Gaikvad and Kantaji Kadam Bande were already living on the country. A third force under Chimnaji Appa, the younger brother of the Peshwa, now invaded Gujarat and plundered Dholka. The two first Sarbuland Khan regarded as little better than bandits, but Chimnaji Appa had behind him the authority both of the king and the Peshwa. To Chimnaji Appa, therefore, the distracted Sarbuland Khan addressed himself and offered to give him the *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* of Gujarat, if he would protect him from other Maratha marauders. This offer was reported to the Peshwa and in 1729 a treaty was executed between Bajirao and the viceroy of Gujarat. Surat was wholly excepted from the treaty. Of the Ahmadabad revenues the Marathas were to receive only five per cent. On the rest of the Gujarat province Sarbuland Khan agreed to pay *Chauth* (one-fourth) and *sardeshmukhi* (one-tenth). On the other hand, Shahu was to provide two thousand five hundred cavalry for the imperial service and keep in check Pilaji Gaikvad and Kantaji Kadam Bande.

In spite of the failure of his first scheme, the Nizam did not yet despair of sowing discord between the Maratha leaders. He found ready to his hand a fitting instrument in Trimbakrao Dabhade. He, it will be remembered, was the son of Khanderao Dabhade and the commander-in-chief of the Maratha army. Pilaji Gaikvad was his lieutenant. The recent treaty between Sarbuland Khan and Bajirao gravely affected his interests. Khanderao's early victories and Pilaji Gaikvad's later successes were to be wholly disregarded and the fruits were to be gathered for the king's treasury by Bajirao alone. On the other hand, as may be seen from a letter written to him by Shahu on May 21, 1728,<sup>1</sup> Trimbakrao himself was debarred from improving his fortunes in Malwa. After a vain protest to King Shahu, the high-spirited Maratha lent a willing ear to the emissaries of the Nizam. It was agreed that Trimbakrao Dabhade should march with all available troops and effect a junction with the Nizam's army near Ahmadnagar. Letters were also sent to Prince Sambhaji, inviting

<sup>1</sup> 'What business have you,' wrote the king, 'to collect money and raise a disturbance in Malwa and plunder the countryside? Whatever money you have collected, you must pay to Bajirao Pandit, otherwise he will collect an equivalent from your private estates. In future you must leave Malwa alone and, retiring to Gujarat, give no further cause for complaint.'

his assistance. Bajirao's secret service was excellent and he soon came to hear of this formidable plot and informed King Shahu. On the other hand, Dabhade's friends at court vigorously assured the king of the Maratha chief's loyalty. It was not he, they pleaded, who began the quarrel, but Chinnaji Appa. The latter had entered Gujarat, the province that by right of conquest belonged, under the royal authority, to the Dabhade family. With his habitual good sense Shahu brushed aside these plausible quibbles. No matter what wrongs Trimbakrao Dabhade had, retorted the king to the Deccan leaders, nothing justified his treason with the Nizam and his seditious correspondence with Sambhaji. Dabhade had chosen to have recourse to arms and he would suffer the consequences. The royal resources would be placed entirely at Bajirao's disposal. Nevertheless Shahu was greatly averse from civil warfare. Defeat meant the possible extinction of the dynasty. Victory would hardly be less disastrous than defeat. Bajirao and not the king would profit by the former's success. On July 8, 1730, Shahu summoned to his camp at Umbrej Bajirao and Chinnaji Appa. He ordered them to go with a field force to Gujarat, but to neglect no means of conciliating the enemy before attacking him. The brothers agreed, but it was the height of the monsoon and in the rainy season the roads of Gujarat are impassable. Family affairs, too, contributed to delay. On August 2, 1730, Rakhmabai, the wife of Chinnaji Appa, gave birth to a baby boy, who on August 14 received the name of Sadashivrao. On August 31 Rakhmabai died of puerperal fever. The sorrowing brothers passed September in Poona. On October 10 fell the *Dasara* festival and on that auspicious day the tents of the two commanders rose at the *vangam*, or junction, of the Muta and Mula rivers, now the residence of the judge of Poona. On October 13 the royal army began the march to Gujarat. Whatever efforts to conciliate Trimbakrao Bajirao may have wished to make, the presence of two armies in the field must have rendered their success unlikely, and while he conducted negotiations, he had to take careful measures to prevent Trimbakrao's junction with the Nizam. Bajirao's troops numbered twenty-five thousand, while Trimbakrao had no less than forty-five thousand men. But the latter's force was composed largely of Koli and Bhil levies who, as the Peshwa knew, would be useless against Maratha troops. The soldiers whom he feared were the Deccan veterans, who had served under Khanderao Dabhade. But these did not outnumber his own and he had besides the prestige of the royal authority. Dabhade, so Bajirao proclaimed, was a rebel and was leagued with a foreign army to enslave Maratha freedom, won by the great king and to divide Shivaji's conquests between Sambhaji and the Moghuls. The first encounter between the rivals was on the Narbada river, when a body of troops under Damaji Gaikwad inflicted a severe reverse on Bajirao's vanguard as it was crossing the stream. But Bajirao with the main army pressed on, and on April 1, 1731, forced Trimbakrao to a battle between Dabhai and Baroda, commonly known as the battle of Dabhai. As Bajirao had foreseen, the new levies fled at the first charge of the Maratha horse. Kantaji

Kadam Bande, who had joined Trimbakrao, but whose interests were really opposed to his, fled also. But the soldiers of Khanderao Dabhade fought with desperate valour in defence of his son. Nor was the general unworthy of his troops. That his elephant might not be swept away in the tide of flight, he had its legs chained to a gun carriage. From his howdah he shot so many arrows that the skin peeled off his fingers, and he directed the battle with such resolution that at one time it seemed to Bajirao that the day was lost. To save it, the Peshwa exchanged his elephant for a horse, collected a number of picked swordsmen and with them cut his way near to where Trimbakrao's elephant stood. He then sent a camel *sowar* with a flag of truce and a letter to the opposing general. 'Such gallantry as yours,' he wrote, 'should be shown against the maharaja's enemies. Let us stay the fight and once more try to effect a compromise.' Trimbakrao scornfully rejected the offer and unchaining his elephant's legs, ordered the mahout to drive it against Bajirao. The Peshwa's swordsmen surrounded the beast and, killing the mahout, attacked the general. Undaunted, the Maratha chief flung on the ground the mahout's body and taking his place, showered arrow after arrow at the swordsmen. Bajirao called to them not to kill Dabhade but to take him alive. This, however, was impossible, as Dabhade refused to yield. At last perfidy succeeded, where generalship had failed. At the moment that Trimbakrao was preparing to counter-attack and was ordering a general advance, his maternal uncle Bhausingrao Toke<sup>1</sup> treacherously shot him in the head from behind, killing him instantly. On the death of their leader, Trimbakrao's troops broke and fled. The Peshwa's victory was complete. Jawaji Dabhade, Maloji Pawar and a son of Pilaji Gaikwad fell on the battlefield. Pilaji Gaikwad escaped wounded from the fight, but he was unable to make any further resistance to the king's authority.

After the battle Bajirao sent an account of it to his royal master Shahu's reply showed how deeply he felt the quarrels of his high commanders.

'He intrigued no doubt with the Nizam,' wrote the king sadly, 'in his wickedness he fought against us and he has eaten the fruit thereof. But the lives of my officers have been uselessly wasted. The past can never be effaced. Both sides must now make peace with each other and cease from strife.'

Having thus written\* to Bajirao, Shahu sent for him and for Trimbakrao's brothers Yashwantrao and Savaji Baburao and for Khanderao Dabhade's widow Umabai and did all that he could to effect a reconciliation. He made both Bajirao and Chimnaji Appa fall at Umabai's feet and ask her forgiveness.<sup>2</sup> Thereafter he conferred on Yashwantrao the title of Senapati and on Savaji Baburao that of Sena Khas Khel. He then bade Umabai and her sons return to Talegaon Dabhade. He himself went to the temple of Khandoba at Jejuri. After prostrating himself in the presence of the god, he purified himself from the guilt of Trimbakrao's death. He next set

himself to the practical side of the question. He defined the boundaries of Malwa and Gujarat and passed orders that half the revenues of each province should be paid direct to the royal treasury by the Peshwa. The other half of the Gujarat revenues should be allotted to the Dabhades for the upkeep of the army of occupation. The other half of the Malwa revenues should similarly be allotted to Bajirao for his military expenses. But in spite of the royal generosity, the house of Dabhade never recovered from the ruinous defeat of Dabhai. Yashwantrao, in spite of his title of commander-in-chief, was unwilling to serve with his father's conqueror. His idleness led him into evil ways and he became a victim to drink and opium. In course of time all the power of the house of Dabhade passed to their lieutenants, the descendants of Pilaji Gaikwad.

While King Shahu's arms were thus victorious in Gujarat, he won a no less decisive success on his southern frontier. Prince Sambhaji on his return to Panhala still refused to acknowledge Shahu's suzerainty. Nevertheless, overawed by the defeat of the Nizam, he remained for some months quiet in Panhala fort. In 1729, however, he received both from Trimbakrao Dabhade and the Nizam letters appealing to him to join them in overthrowing the domination of Bajirao. These appeals found support in Sambhaji's wife Jijabai, a headstrong, violent-tempered woman of the house of Sindia of Toragal, and in one of the prince's nobles Uday Chavan. The latter was the son of that Vithoji Chavan, who had acted as Santaji Ghorpade's lieutenant in the daring raid on the emperor's camp at Tulapur. In 1696 Vithoji Chavan had fallen in the Carnatic and his son Uday succeeded to his possessions and his title of Himmat Bahadur. The father had been the close friend of Ramchandra Nilkanth and with Ramchandra Uday joined the side of Tarabai. He built himself a castle at Battis Shirale and from that vantage point raided Shahu's territories. With grim humour he gave to his plunder the name of *Chavan chauth*.

Uday Chavan now obtained from Sambhaji leave to lead a force across the Warna river. He pitched his camp at Shirol and began to plunder the countryside. Shahu, who was hunting in the neighbourhood, sent for Uday Chavan, promising him a safe-conduct. Uday Chavan presented himself before the king, who complained bitterly of his behaviour. Uday Chavan said little in reply, but returned to camp, his heart bursting with resentment. A few days later four assassins entered Shahu's tent. So majestic was the king's bearing and so indifferent was he to danger, that the assassins lost heart and, throwing down their arms, begged for mercy. He asked them whence they had come and they admitted that they had been sent by Uday Chavan. With admirable irony Shahu gave them each a gold bracelet and bade them pick up their arms and take back to their employer a certificate from himself, that they were good and faithful servants. But if the king could thus jest with death, he was in earnest in his resolve to put a stop to these unprovoked inroads. Since the battle of Palkhed the *Pratinidhi* had lost much of his master's favour. Hearing that a force was to be raised for service against Sambhaji, he begged



the king to entrust to him the command and allow him by his future conduct to atone for his mistakes in the past. The king consented, but sent as Shripatrao's lieutenant an experienced soldier, Shambhusing Jadhav. He was the second son of Dhanaji Jadhav and the younger brother of Chandrasen Jadhav. He had with his brother entered the Nizam's service. Having quarrelled with Chandrasen, he had made his peace with the king.

Sambhaji, although willing to wound, was yet afraid to strike, and he would gladly have disowned Udaji Chavan. This, too, was the counsel of Vyankatrao Joshi, Bajirao's brother-in-law, and of Bhagwantrao, the son of Ramchandra Nilkanth. But Udaji Chavan had great influence with his master and by promising him certain victory he induced Sambhaji to declare open war and to join the camp on the Warna with large reinforcements. In spite of Udaji's boasts, victory did not attend Sambhaji's banners. In January 1730 the *Pratimdh*, at Shambhusing's suggestion, suddenly marched against the Warna camp and completely surprised the enemy. Udaji Chavan, who was responsible for the expedition, was one of the first to leave the field. He induced Sambhaji to flee with him. The Kolhapur soldiery, deserted by their leaders, lost heart and were slaughtered like sheep or driven into the Warna. All Sambhaji's military chest and stores fell into the *Pratimdh*'s hands. So, too, did Tarabai, Rajasbai, Sambhaji's wife Jjabai, Bhagwantrao Ramchandra and Vyankatrao Joshi. The *Pratimdh* took his prisoners to King Shahu. The latter with chivalrous courtesy sent to Panhala Rajasbai and Jjabai, Sambhaji's mother and wife. He would also have sent Tarabai. But the old queen was only too glad to escape from her co-wife's clutches. With sardonic wit she observed that it was her lot everywhere to live in confinement. It was, therefore, useless to move her from one prison to another. Shahu readily consented to keep her with him. He had an old palace in Satara fort prepared for her reception. There she lived until Shahu's death once more brought her into prominence. Bhagwantrao Ramchandra was ransomed by Sambhaji and after the lapse of some time Bajirao paid ten thousand rupees as ransom for Vyankatrao Joshi. Udaji Chavan's influence did not survive this decisive defeat and his own cowardly conduct. The *Pratimdh*'s victorious army took Vishalgad by storm in October 1730. Sambhaji's nobles hastened to make their peace with the invader; and the prince had no alternative but to throw himself on his cousin's mercy. Generous as ever, Shahu willingly forgave him and Tarabai lent her services in the negotiations for peace. There had been two previous attempts on Shahu's part to obtain a treaty, first from Prince Shivaji in 1708 and again from Prince Sambhaji in 1726. The drafts of these abortive negotiations formed a basis for the new draft. Pending its preparation Shahu invited Sambhaji to visit him. Such an invitation was indistinguishable from a command and Sambhaji accepted it. In January 1731, Shahu sent from Satara Shripatrao the *Pratimdh*, Ambaji Purandare and other notable officers and nobles to escort Sambhaji into his dominions. With a large body of horse the *Pratimdh* encamped below Panhala. Ascending the fort, he presented

Sambhaji with a number of horses and elephants and costly saddlery. A day or two later Sambhaji descended from the fort and returned the visit. These courtesies over, Sambhaji, escorted by his own picked troops and the *Pratimdh*'s escort, marched with him to Wathar in the Satara district. There the prince and the soldiers halted while the *Pratimdh* went to Umbraj to inform Shahu of the arrival of the royal visitor. From Umbraj the king moved to Karhad and pitched his camp on the banks of the Kistna river. An open space known as the Jakhinvadi plain had been chosen as the meeting-place of the two cousins. The ground between the royal camps was covered with the tents and equipage of the nobles of Maharashtra, who on this great occasion vied with each other in the splendour of their trappings and the profusion of their jewelry. There were present no less than two hundred thousand soldiers, together with horses and baggage trains in countless numbers. On the appointed day Shahu and Sambhaji on the backs of elephants set out from their respective camps, their howdahs blazing with precious stones. When they came in sight of each other, their elephants kneeled and their riders left them to mount richly saddled Arab chargers. When the horses met, the two princes alighted. Sambhaji put his head on Shahu's feet in token of submission. Shahu bent down and lifting up his cousin clasped him to his breast. Then according to the gracious custom of the east, Shahu and Sambhaji decked each other with golden favours and garlands of flowers. This formal meeting over, both princes returned to their quarters. On February 17, 1731, Shahu received a visit from Sambhaji. It was arranged that the king and the prince should again meet in public on a open space close to Karhad on the banks of the Kistna. The ceremonies observed were similar to those at the first meeting. But after the princes had embraced, Shahu seated Sambhaji beside him on his own elephant, while Shambhising Jadhav waved the royal horsetails impartially over the heads of both. Shahu's elephant bore him and his guest back to the king's camp. There Shahu lavished on his cousin presents of elephants, horses, cloth of gold, jewels and treasure. From Karhad the princes went to Umbraj, where the king gave a series of magnificent entertainments. Then he insisted that Sambhaji should pass with him the *Holi* festival at Satara. The Peshwa's mansion was placed at the prince's disposal. There he remained for two months. While the terms of the treaty were being discussed, the Maratha nobles in turn invited Sambhaji to a series of splendid banquets. When the treaty of Wana, as it is called, had been settled, Shahu showered on his guest further gifts, one of which was a sum of two hundred thousand rupees in cash, and allowed him to depart. Fatehsing Bhosle was ordered to escort the prince back to Panhala. Shahu himself accompanied Sambhaji for eight miles, all of which were ablaze with the jewels and silks of the nobles in the train of the two monarchs. Even the splendours of the French nobles, when Henry met Francis on the field of the cloth of gold, would have paled before the magnificence of Sambhaji's reception by Shahu. Nevertheless behind all the royal courtesy and munificence were the clauses of the treaty and they did not err on the side of

undue leniency. Its wording showed that it was dictated by a superior to an inferior, and converted Sambhaji from an independent sovereign to a prince in subordinate alliance to Shahu and completely cut off Sambhaji from the north. He could only extend his dominions southwards and even then he bound himself to hand over half his conquests to Shahu.<sup>1</sup>

Sambhaji never again carried on war against his suzerain. But he often grumbled at the harshness of the Warna treaty and made various efforts to get it modified. In 1734 and 1741 he went with his queen to Satara to try to win over Shahu to leniency, but in vain. In 1741, however, he induced Balaji Bajirao to promise to him the succession of Shahu's kingdom, a promise which, for reason to be disclosed hereafter, Balaji failed to keep. In 1746 Sambhaji spent no less than six months in Satara trying without success to enforce his claims to some estate in the Carnatic. It must be conceded that there was nothing in the prince's character to excite the reader's sympathy. He was lazy and self-indulgent and cared for war only as a means of obtaining plunder. He married seven wives and on them and on his mistresses he spent the revenues of his little kingdom. He died on December 20, 1760. His former adviser Uday Chavan preceded him by seven years. In spite of the treaty of Warna, Uday Chavan still strove to create disorders in Shahu's kingdom. In 1731 he made another raid into the king's territory. Shahu detached a force under Yashwantrao Potnis to oppose him. He was defeated and taken, but released on payment of a heavy fine. In 1737, when Shahu marched against Miraj, Uday Chavan openly helped the Nizam. He was made prisoner by the *Pratinidhi*. Shahu graciously pardoned him, but he fled into the Nizam's dominions, whence he from time to time made plundering expeditions into Maharashtra. In 1751 Balaji Bajirao bribed him with an estate near Digraj in Sangli territory. But Uday Chavan never ceased to be a robber chief. In 1753 he made a raid on a village near Miraj. A bullet from a villager's gun knocked him off his horse. His foot caught in his stirrup and, hanging head downwards, he was dragged and kicked to death.

After the Dabhades had gone to Talegaon, Bajirao returned to Gujarat. Obtaining from Sarbuland Khan a ratification of their former treaty, Bajirao went back to Satara. His intention was to teach the Nizam such a lesson as would for ever restrain him from attempts to sow discord among the chiefs of Maharashtra.

## CHAPTER XXX

### KANHOJI ANGRE AND THE ENGLISH

SINCE their naval encounter with Shivaji<sup>2</sup> the English in Surat and Bombay had lived in peace with their neighbours. They were brought to the verge of ruin by a domestic upheaval. The British Parliament had certainly meant to confer on the East India Company the monopoly

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, for the full text of the treaty.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 109.

of the eastern trade; but the charter was ambiguously worded, and some adventurous London merchants, interpreting its language according to their own wishes, held that they were allowed by law to set up as trade rivals to the Company. In September 1682, one Say set up as a trader in Muscat. In October 1682, another English ship came to Goa, three more to Bengal and yet another to Surat. These 'interlopers', as they were called, made such handsome profits that two of the Bombay Council, Petit and Bouchier<sup>1</sup> by name, took shares in their ventures. Their conduct came to light and they were dismissed. Two other Englishmen, Vincent and Pitt, were for similar offences dismissed by the Bengal Council.<sup>1</sup> These four men combined and by their correspondence corrupted their former fellow-servants. At the same time they did their utmost to win over to the cause the military. Their task was made easier by the action of Sir John Child, the president of the East India Company. He had lately cut down the officers' allowances and reduced the rate of exchange at which both they and the common soldiers were paid. The officers at first remonstrated, but on receiving a discourteous refusal, determined to mutiny. On December 24, 1683, Captain Keigwin, the senior military officer in Bombay, backed by the guard of the fort, seized Charles Ward, the deputy governor, and his four members of the council. He then issued a proclamation that he was holding the island for the king as his loyal subject and that the government would in future rest in himself as governor. As his council, he appointed Captains Fletcher and Thornburn and two ensigns. Any attempt to restore the Company's government would be suppressed with military rigour.

It must be admitted that the rebels showed a resolution that had often been lacking in the counsels of the Company. They got Sambhaji to confirm Shivaji's treaty with Oxenden and to pay the 2,000 pagodas which were still due to the Company for their losses at Hubli and Rajapur. Further, the king granted them the right to establish factories at Cuddalore and Thevenapattam. On the other hand, the Portuguese would neither trade with nor recognize the rebels; and the friendship of the Sidis which they cultivated was more harmful to them than profitable. The Sidis used the harbour of Bombay as a base for their piracies, and in no long time the inhabitants of the mainland refused supplies to the islands. By the end of the monsoon of 1684, the rebels were pressed by scarcity and readily accepted an amnesty offered them by Sir Thomas Grantham, who on November 3, 1684, reached Bombay in His Majesty's ship *Charles the Second*. On November 11, the Company without bloodshed recovered their possession. Keigwin sailed back to England, the rest of the rebels resumed their former posts.

The outbreak, although suppressed, had evil consequences. The trade of Bombay dwindled and its importance declined. At the same time the rise of Kanhoji Angre's power threatened its very existence. As admiral of the Maratha fleet, he was in possession of the island of Khanderi, sixteen miles south of Bombay harbour. As has already

<sup>1</sup> Orme, *Historical Fragments*, p. 182.

been related, he tried to make himself independent, but was at length induced by Balaji Vishvanath in return for help against the Sidis of Janjira to become a subordinate ally of King Shahu. With the aid of the royal troops he drove the Sidis from the Konkan seaboard, taking a number of their fortresses, of which the chief were Vijaydurg, or Gheriah as it was then called, and Kolaba. To retain his possessions against the Sidis, Kanhoji Angre was obliged to maintain a large force, and to pay his men he had to levy *chauth*, as he called it, from the ships trading in the Arabian Sea. His method of levying *chauth* was to take the ships with their entire cargoes, and the phrase was merely a euphemism for piracy.

His first recorded attack on an English ship was on the yacht<sup>1</sup> conveying Chown, the newly appointed governor of the English factory at Karwar. With Chown, as his wife, who lived to have the cruel experience of being widowed three times before she was twenty. She was the daughter of Captain Cooke, the Company's chief engineer in Bengal, and was married when only thirteen to Harvey, the then governor of Karwar, a man far older than she was. He died a year after her marriage and not long afterwards she married Chown, who had been nominated governor of Karwar in her husband's place. They embarked together on the yacht of Hasleby, then governor of Bombay. To escort the yacht went a small man-of-war. While they were still in sight of Bombay island, the two ships were attacked by a fleet of grabs, or armed sailing vessels, belonging to Angre. The yacht defended itself gallantly. But Chown's arm was shot off and he bled to death in his wife's arms. Mrs Chown and the crew were taken. The man-of-war fled back to Bombay with the news of Mrs Chown's capture. The Bombay government applied for her release, but to procure it had to pay Rs. 30,000 by way of ransom. A short time after her return to Bombay she married a Gifford, who in no long time was murdered at Anjango by the Nagas of Malabar. She then sailed to England and remained for the rest of her life satisfied with this triple although brief experience of matrimony. For two years after the capture of the governor's yacht Angre left the English alone, then he attacked the *Sommers* and the *Grantham*, two ships commanded by Captains Peacock and Collet. The two ships successfully beat off the pirates, but afterwards Angre took a number of country craft which he armed and added to his fleet. These caused immense damage to the English coastwise trade. In 1715 Charles Boone was appointed Governor of Bombay. He decided to destroy, if he could, Angre's strongholds. He had built at Surat two large frigates called the *Fame* and the *Revenge* and at Karwar a third frigate called the *Britannia*. About the same time he built a wall round Bombay and mounted on it a number of forty-eight pounders. He next fitted out the frigates and sending with them a fleet of smaller vessels he ordered them to make an attack on Vijaydurg. In April 1717, the English fleet cast anchor in Vijaydurg harbour, which was only twelve hours' sail from Bombay.

<sup>1</sup> The following account is taken from Downing, *History of the India Wars*.

In command was Captain Berlew. His plan was to batter down the fortifications by the fire of his frigates, next to send in a lighted fireship which would drive the garrison out of the fortress, and then, running his small vessels ashore, to destroy the garrison and take Vijaydurg by escalade, as they strove to retreat. But Captain Berlew had made his plan without a full knowledge of its difficulties. The fortifications resisted the heavy guns of the frigates. The shells that fell inside the fortress did little damage, because their fuses were too long. A boom across the inner harbour stopped the fireship and the garrison, so far from retreating, jeered at their enemies from the secure shelter of the walls. When the English tried to escalade, their scaling-ladders proved too short. Night fell and the besiegers had achieved nothing beyond knocking down three houses inside Vijaydurg. It was clear that to take the place was impossible. It was, therefore, decided to destroy the shipping and sail back to Bombay. But even this proved beyond the power of the besiegers. Next morning they landed safely at some distance below Vijaydurg. But when they came within a mile of the shipping they found it protected by a deep and muddy swamp which they could not cross. The garrison watched with amusement their futile efforts and directly they began to retreat, opened on them a heavy fire. As the garrison did not exceed a hundred, they did not sally out of the castle, so Captain Berlew, once out of range, withdrew unmolested to his ships. He had achieved nothing and had lost a number of killed and wounded. The casualties had been increased by the bursting of a gun on board a galley called the *Hunter*, which killed three and wounded many others.

Boone attempted nothing more until November 1718, when the English fleet set out to storm Khanderi. Unhappily he chose for his admiral not one of his English captains, but a Portuguese named Manuel de Castro. This man had become a Musulman and had joined Angre. Afterwards, to escape that chief's wrath, he had fled to Bombay. Insinuating and persuasive, he won Boone's confidence by assuring him that he knew perfectly every cove and inlet of Angre's islands. His appointment as admiral not unnaturally annoyed the English captains, who had formed no high opinion of de Castro when present at a recent action against some Kanarese pirates near Karwar. The fleet under de Castro's command was a formidable one. Three British ships, the *Addison*, the *Stanhope* and the *Dartmouth* with 300 soldiers on board had reached Bombay in September, and with this reinforcement the English numbered no less than 2,500 men. On November 3, 1718, the fleet anchored south of Khanderi. On November 4, de Castro sent a number of boats to row round the island and reconnoitre it for a suitable landing place. The sailors reported that they had found a sandy cove and it was resolved to land there after silencing the enemy's guns. At 4 a.m. on the next day, the English ships opened fire and continued all day, repeatedly dismounting Angre's cannon. The garrison replied vigorously until 4 p.m., when their ammunition gave out. Their silence filled the besiegers with hope and Boone, who was present on board the *Addison*, told de Castro to lie at the mouth of the sandy cove to prevent any enemy

ships entering it. But de Castro proved not only incompetent, but treacherous. During the night he landed on the island, told the garrison Boone's plan and afterwards let five Maratha supply ships pass through his fleet. Boone heard of de Castro's treachery next day and he passed November 6 in considering whether or not he should attempt a landing. He finally decided to attempt it. Early next day, the boats were manned, but the tide was too high and before the English could get on shore the Marathas with their fresh supply of ammunition shot down sixty of them. Nevertheless the landing-party persevered until it reached one of the outer gates of the fort. A certain Steele, axe in hand, cut through the bar of the gate and, had he been supported, might have forced it open. But two captains in the Company's service disarmed themselves. One threw down his sword and refused to leave his boat. The other marched up to one of the gates and fired his pistol into the lock. As he might have anticipated, the bullet rebounded and wounded him in the nose. The pain of the wound overcame his courage, and sounding a retreat he fled back with his men to the boats. A small party under one Downing, from whose account I have written this chapter, still persevered. But the garrison shot them down from the walls, until the few survivors were forced to follow their comrades and return to their ships.

Boone, justly angered at the failure of the assault, relieved de Castro of his command and a court-martial sentenced him to be sent as a slave to Saint Helena. From that island, however, he succeeded in escaping back to India and again joined Angre. Boone, although disgusted, was not dismayed and had a floating castle made to which he gave the name of the *Prahm*. It had a low draught, was very stoutly built and carried twelve 48-pounders. It was believed that it would, if towed close to Khanderi, be able, uninjured itself, to batter down the fortifications. But before it could effect anything a strange mishap overtook it. In 1719 the English fleet with the *Prahm* in tow went down to Anjango. On their return journey they fell in with two English pirates, England and Taylor, on board the *Cassandra* and *Victory*, two ships which they had taken from the Portuguese. The English fleet could easily have overpowered the pirates, but Captain Upton, the officer in command, was a poltroon and he was so alarmed that he burnt the *Prahm* and sailed back as fast as he could to Bombay harbour.

By this time the successes of Angre and the harm done their ships by England, Taylor and other pirates had led the Court of Directors to beg King George I for naval help. In 1722 the king graciously sent out a squadron of four men-of-war, the *Lyon* under Captain Readish, the *Salisbury* under Captain Cockburn, the *Exeter* under Sir Robert Johnson and the *Shoreham* under Captain Maine; the squadron was under the command of Commodore Mathews. The ships reached Bombay at different intervals, but were all gathered in the great harbour by October 3. Some days, however, passed before the commodore would land. As a highly placed officer of the Royal Navy, he deemed himself superior in rank to Boone, the Governor

of Bombay and president of the council, and would not leave his ship until he had received a salute from the shore batteries. On the other hand Boone, who, as president of the council was the king's representative, considered himself senior to the commodore.<sup>1</sup> After many messages and much controversy, Boone gave way and saluted Commodore Mathews, as he desired. The commodore and his officers then landed, but bore themselves in a manner that left in no doubt the poor opinion they had of the Company's servants. They would hardly deign speak to any one except the governor. At the same time hardly a day passed, that they did not fight at least one duel among themselves. The Company's servants, although humiliated by the arrogance of the visitors, still hoped great things from their quarrelsome dispositions and fancied that the mere sight of one of Angre's castles would rouse them to such fury that resistance would be impossible. Commodore Mathews discussed various plans with the president and his council. Finally it was resolved to attack Kolaba and to invite the help of the Portuguese. Messengers were sent both to the Portuguese viceroy at Goa and to the General of the North, as the Governor of Bassein and the island of Salsette was called. Both the high Portuguese officials came to Bombay and accepted the English invitation, agreeing to lead in person contingents from Goa and Bassein. Boone entertained them magnificently and they in turn consented courteously to serve under a British commander. Boone appointed Cowing, one of his council, general-in-chief, and distributed among other civil servants of the Company a number of military commissions. The Governor of Bombay reviewed the English forces on the island and expressed himself confident of success. The troops embarked and were conveyed to Chaul, where the Portuguese contingents awaited them. From Chaul they marched ten or twelve miles to Kolaba. The allied forces numbered no less than five thousand men with twenty-four field pieces, and if properly led, should have conquered all Angre's possessions. But the general-in-chief, Cowing, had no experience of war. Commodore Mathews had only seen service at sea, and between the English and the Portuguese was the mutual distrust born of more than a century of rivalry and warfare. From the first, things went badly with the expedition. Captain Maine, anxious to bring his guns to bear on the fort, ran his ship, the *Shorcham*, on the rocks. Commodore Mathews venturing out too far to reconnoitre the enemy's position, was attacked by one of Angre's troopers and received a lance wound in the thigh. Galloping after the trooper in one of the furies of rage to which he was unusually prone, Mathews fired at him his two pistols, only to find that he had forgotten to load them. The viceroy of Goa complained of illness and retired to his cabin on board ship. Cowing, however, would not delay the attack and next day the English army led by Cowing and the Portuguese contingents led by the General of the North, marched boldly up to Angre's walls. The English sailors put up scaling

<sup>1</sup> He was appointed Governor by the Company and President by the King.



ladders and a number of them under Bellamy, a naval officer, scaled the walls. But Angre, cognizant of the allied plans, had assembled a considerable army inside the fortress. The sailors were attacked and checked by large bodies of Marathas, while another Maratha force accompanied by numerous war-elephants attacked the Portuguese flank. The Portuguese, ignorant how to meet the monsters, were seized with a panic and fled, leaving the English sailors and soldiers to sustain the shock of Angre's entire army. After a brave resistance, the English were driven back to their camp with the loss of several of their guns and nearly all their ammunition. Commodore Mathews, furious at the defeat, did not hesitate to charge the Portuguese with treachery, and to enforce his argument he thrust his cane into the mouth of the General of the North and was hardly less discourteous to the viceroy of Goa. No further co-operation was possible after the commodore's conduct. The Portuguese marched back to Chaul. The English sailed back to Bombay. After this third disaster, Boone gave up attempting to reduce Angre's strongholds and confined himself to the convoying of the English trading ships by armed vessels. In 1724 the Dutch attacked Vijaydurg with no less than seven warships, two bomb vessels, and a body of regular troops. They also failed, and the stout old Maratha admiral, victorious alike over English, Dutch and Portuguese, sailed the Arabian Sea in triumph. In 1727 he took the *Darby*, a richly laden East Indiaman, and up to 1731,<sup>1</sup> the year of his death, he was the terror of the western coast.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### MARATHA CONQUEST OF MALWA AND GUJARAT

A D 1731 TO 1736

AT the close of the last chapter but one I left Bajirao planning a campaign to punish Nizam-ul-Mulk for his conspiracy with Trimbakrao Dabhade. That wary old soldier could expect no help from Delhi and feared to face unaided the entire resources of the Maratha kingdom, led by Bajirao in person. He at once sent envoys to the Peshwa and in return for peace, offered to give him a free passage through his dominions into Malwa and pressed him rather to carry his arms to Delhi than to waste his energies against a mere viceroy like himself. This advice was eminently pleasing to the Peshwa and was similar to that which he had himself offered to his king. In August 1731 Bajirao and Nizam-ul-Mulk agreed to give each other a free hand. The Nizam should be at liberty to gratify his ambitions in the south, the Peshwa in the north. After the execution of the treaty, the latter made full preparation for the conquest of central India. As previously related,

<sup>1</sup> I have taken the date of Angre's death from Ismael Gracías, *Os ultimos cinco generaes do Norte*. Grant Duff has given 1728. But he admits that he is not sure of it.

the emperor had, on the rebellion of Nizam-ul-Mulk, conferred the government of Malwa on a certain Raja Gridhar. He was a man not only of great parts and courage, but also a scion of a distinguished house. His family were Nagar Brahmans of Allahabad. His father Dayaram and his uncle Chabilaram had been the personal attendants of Bahadur Shah's second son Azimushan during his long viceroyalty of Bengal. On Bahadur Shah's death in 1712 Dayaram fell fighting for Azimushan. After the latter's defeat and death, Chabilaram attached himself to Jahandar Shah and was appointed military governor of Manikpur. He took on his staff Dayaram's son Raja Gridhar. On Farukhsir's rebellion Chabilaram and Raja Gridhar, as old servants of his father Azimushan, deserved to the pretender and gave him valuable help both in soldiers and money. Chabilaram distinguished himself greatly at the battle of Agra and was made viceroy of that province and afterwards of Allahabad. On the fall of Farukhsir the Sayads flung Raja Gridhar into prison. He escaped and joined Chabilaram at Allahabad. There Chabilaram died. But Raja Gridhar managed to outwit the Sayads by corrupting the officers sent against him and on the rebellion of Nizam-ul-Mulk was raised to the government of Malwa. In the absence of the Nizam, Raja Gridhar was for a time complete master of the province. He easily overcame local disaffection, but in the end he was unable to make headway against the Marathas. As far back as 1698 Udayi Powar had raided Malwa and camped at Manda. But it was not until the Rajput chiefs, disgusted at Aurangzib's treatment, invited the Marathas to free them from the Moghuls, that the Marathas gained a permanent footing in the province. The chief leader in this movement was Savai Jaisingh, the maharaja of Jaipur. An even more valuable ally they found in one Nandalal Mandlaji Chaudhari. His family were *chaudharis*, village servants similar to *chaugulas*, in the town of Indore. It was their special duty to guard the fords across the Nerbada river. Nandalal Chaudhari entered into correspondence with the Peshwa and between 1723 and 1724 Malharao Holkar was through his help able to camp at Indore, while Udayi Powar conquered the town and province of Dhar. Pilaji Gaikwad next began to make incursions from the side of Gujarat and Chimnaji Appa also plundered the stricken province. In vain Raja Gridhar appealed for help to Delhi. By 1729 his force had dwindled almost to nothing and Chimnaji Appa and Udayi Powar combined to destroy it. Raja Gridhar was encamped fifty miles to the north-east of Dewas at the village of Sarangpur. By a forced march Chimnaji Appa and Udayi Powar contrived to surprise and kill him. On the death of Raja Gridhar the emperor at once appointed his cousin Daya Bahadur to the viceroyalty of Malwa. On October 12, 1731, he met the fate which had overtaken his kinsman. On his arrival in Malwa he tried to restore order by instituting a reign of terror. At the same time he implored the vizier Khan Dauran to send him a few troops, promising him that so long as he lived, a wall stood between the Marathas and the capital. On his fall they would overwhelm the empire. In spite of this prophetic truth, Khan Dauran sent him no more troops than he had sent Raja Gridhar.

On the other hand the oppressed nobles of Malwa implored the help of Savai Jaisingh of Jaipur. The latter was unwilling to declare himself openly against the emperor of Delhi. He invited the nobles of central India to apply for help to Bajirao. Bajirao referred them to Malharrao Holkar. At the same time Nandalal Chaudhari undertook to guide Holkar across the fords of the Narbada. Late in September 1731, Holkar with twelve thousand men crossed the great river near the village of Akbarpur and invaded Malwa. Nothing daunted, Daya Bahadur hastened to block Holkar's further progress by holding a pass known as the Tanda ghat. But Nandalal's spies informed Holkar of Daya Bahadur's movements and he led Malharrao Holkar through another track, known as the Shairav pass. Daya Bahadur hastened after his mobile enemy, his time Holkar no longer fled. Wheeling back, he met Daya Bahadur at the village of Thal, near Dhar, and destroyed his army. Daya Bahadur fell on the battlefield.

Daya Bahadur's successor was a Rohilla Afghan named Mahomed Khan Bangash. He was a gallant soldier, whose bravery had earned him the title of Ghazenter Jang, or the Lion in Battle. But in every quality except courage he seems to have been lacking. When he received the viceroyalty of Malwa, he was governor of Allahabad. He collected a large force of his own clansmen and obtained a train of artillery by stripping his fortresses. With these in 1733 he entered central India. Instead, however, of trying to rouse the Rajput clans to join him against the common Maratha peril, he acted as if he were in an enemy's country and by his conduct speedily made it so. He first occupied Bundelkhand, the land of the Bundela Rajputs, and drove out of it one of its lawful and most powerful princes, Raja Chatrasal. He invaded his capital and seized his strongholds. Chatrasal, knowing that he could get no redress from the emperor, sent in the form of a stanza a message to Bajirao begging him to save him from his enemy just as Vishnu had saved Gajendra.<sup>1</sup> The story to which the raja alluded is whimsical even among Hindu tales. According to that story it so happened that about the same time, but at widely different places, a king named Indradyumna and a *gandharva*, or immortal singer, of Indra's court named Hunhu were by the curses of *rishis* turned, the one into an elephant, the other into a crocodile. The *rishi* who cursed Indradyumna so far relented as to promise him that he would regain his human shape at such time as

<sup>1</sup> The *Peshwa Bakhar* gives the stanza as follows:

Tich gati zali gajendrachi  
Tich aj amchi sachi  
Baji jate Bundelachi  
Rakhi Bajiraya.

But the real words are given in Parasnis, *Marathyanche Parakan*, p. 65

Jo gat Grahgajendrakī so gat bhai he aj  
Baji jat Bundelankī rakho Baji laj,  
(What befell Gajendra has come to pass now,  
The Bundela's honour is being lost. Save him, O Bajirao.)

the god Vishnu would save him from the jaws of a crocodile. Indradyumna spent many years in the guise of an elephant and so great was his prowess that he became the king of a wild herd and took the title of Gajendra, or Indra among Elephants. One day when Gajendra was bathing in a pool, the *gandharva* Hunhu, now a crocodile, seized him by the leg and for all his strength would have dragged him in and drowned him, had Vishnu not heard his agonizing prayers. Leaving his heaven Vaikunth, the god, hastened to Gajendra's help and with his divine discus shore the crocodile in two. Touched by the discus, Hunhu once more became a *gandharva*. Gajendra freed from Hunhu's grip became once more a human being and, as such, was taken by the kindly god to his heavenly kingdom.

Bajirao's help to Chatrasal was not less effective than that of Vishnu. Mahomed Bangash was resting from his labours during the rainy season, and so satisfied was he with his easy successes that he sent back to their own country his Rohilla levies, retaining round his person only a small bodyguard. While he thus lived in a fool's paradise, Bajirao was approaching at the head of an allied army of Marathas and Bundelas. The Bundelas led Bajirao safely through the forests and mountains of that wild country, and came upon Mahomed Bangash before he could recall his Rohillas. With his tiny force he boldly met the enemy in the field and suffered a complete defeat. With a few survivors he escaped through the jungles to the fort of Jetpur, or the Town of Conquest. The allies at first lost touch with him but afterwards besieged him and reduced him to the greatest distress. From this intolerable situation he was saved by the energy of his wife and of his son Kaim Khan. They first threw themselves in vain at the foot of the throne and asked for reinforcements from the first minister. The wife then sent round her veil among the Rohilla nobles and Kaim Khan harangued them with the eloquence of despair. The joint appeal to their honour and emotions was irresistible. All the adults in the clan vowed to rescue their chief or die in the attempt. By forced marches they followed Kaim Khan to Jetpur, and falling in a mass on the investing troops forced their way into the fort and carried back their clansman to the safety of Rohilkand. The emperor, although slow to help, was quick to censure and at once dismissed Mahomed Khan Bangash not only from the viceroyalty of Malwa, but also from the governorship of Allahabad.<sup>1</sup>

Although the allies failed to take Mahomed Khan Bangash, his flight definitely rid the Bundelas of their enemy. Raja Chatrasal was so grateful that he adopted Bajirao as his son and by his will divided his kingdom between Bajirao and his real offspring.<sup>2</sup> As the Raja died soon after this campaign, Bajirao obtained the ownership of one-third of Bundelkhand, including the provinces of Sagar and Kalpi.

<sup>1</sup> *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin*. There is a dispute about the date of this incident. Sardesai gives the date as 1729. But I have preferred to follow the Musulman historian. But see W. Irvine, *History of Nawabs of Farrukabad*.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A.

From this vantage point he was able soon to dominate all central India.

Although the emperor and Khan Dauran had refused all support to Sarbuland Khan, the viceroy of Gujarat, they were both indignant at his cession to Bajirao of the *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* and at once relieved him of his office. To it was appointed Abhai Singh, son of Ajit Singh and maharaja of Jodhpur. Sarbuland, who was conscious of no fault, attacked and defeated his successor. His honour satisfied, he made his way unattended to the maharaja's camp, trusting to Rajput chivalry to leave it without harm. Nor was his trust misplaced. Abhai Singh rose and embraced his visitor. Learning from Sarbuland Khan that he had merely fought the action to vindicate his honour, and that he wished to retire from Gujarat, he took from the Musulman's head his plain cloth turban and put on it his own headgear blazing with jewels. Then with every honour and a fitting escort he sent him on his way to Delhi (1734). There the emperor at first refused to receive him, but at length appointed him, in place of Mahomed Khan Bangash, governor of Allahabad.

On the departure of Sarbuland Khan, Abhai Singh, applied himself to the arduous task of driving the Marathas from Gujarat. Nor was the opportunity unfavourable. The Peshwa was away in command of the army of Malwa. Chimnaji Appa, his brother, was watching the family interests at court. There remained only Pilaji Gaikvad. His reputation had suffered since the defeat of Dabhai. Nevertheless he had established himself in Baroda and several other large towns. Abhai Singh sent a large force under a Rajput subordinate to retake Baroda. The recapture of Baroda, however, was Abhai Singh's only success. Pilaji Gaikvad was personally popular with the hillmen of Gujarat and with their aid won several fights against Abhai Singh's Rajputs. In his anger, the maharaja was tempted to an act of treachery most uncommon among Rajput princes. He decided to assassinate Pilaji during a pretended negotiation. The spot chosen for the crime was Dakore, a place deemed holy by the worshippers of Krishna. In beautiful verse the Maratha poet Mahipati<sup>1</sup> relates that a Maratha saint named Ramdas, who lived at Dakore, used every year to perform a pilgrimage from that city to Dwarka in Kathiawar, the former capital of the divine Krishna and the chief seat of his worship. At last Ramdas grew so feeble that he resolved to make but one more pilgrimage and then bid the beloved idol of Dwarka good-bye for ever. When he reached Dwarka, Ramdas told the god his decision, and with many tears bade Krishna farewell. The deity, touched by his devotion, told him that if he would put the idol in the temple chariot, it would go with him to Dakore. Although the idol was a great mass of stone and Ramdas was weak with age, he lifted it without effort into the chariot and drove with it back to his own village. Next morning the priests missed both the image and the chariot, and guessed that Ramdas had stolen them. They followed him with all speed to Dakore. Ramdas tried to hide

<sup>1</sup> Mahipati, *Bhakti Vijaya*.

he idol in the village pond. But the priests dragged the pond and recovered the god. Before starting for Dwarka the priests went to eat their dinner, and Ramdas, left alone with Krishna, upbraided him for letting himself be taken. The god replied that if Ramdas would offer to buy the image for its weight in gold, the priests would let him keep it. Ramdas replied that he had no gold save a single nose-ring in his wife's nose. 'Put the nose-ring in the scales,' answered the god, 'and I shall make it outweigh my image.' Ramdas did as Krishna ordered and events happened as the god had foretold. The greedy priests consented to sell their image for its weight in gold. The villagers brought the village scales and at Ramdas' request stood near them so that, if need be, they could hold the priests to the bargain. In one scale was put the idol. In the other Ramdas, aimed shouts of laughter, put his wife's nose-ring. But the laughter ceased when the scale with the massive image rose upwards and the scale with the tiny golden circle dropped to the ground. The priests would have gone back on their agreement, but the villagers drove them away and kept Krishna's idol. A new image of Krishna was set up at Dwarka. The old one is still to be seen at Dakore and is deemed doubly sacred both from its age and from the miracle performed by it to honour the Maratha saint.

Unhappily, the sanctity of the spot neither hindered the assassin nor prolonged the victim's life. Several times Pilaji received the pretended envoys of the maharaja, but no chance occurred favourable to the assassins. One evening they deliberately prolonged the discussion until after dusk, then took leave and went outside the tent. Suddenly one of their number exclaimed that he had forgotten something. He entered the tent, put his mouth close to Pilaji's ear, as if to whisper to him some state secret, and with his dagger stabbed him to the heart (1732). The murderer was instantly killed, but his companions escaped. Abhai Singh was soon to realize that he had been guilty not only of a crime but of a blunder. The Kolis, Bhils, Waghris, and other wild tribes of Gujarat, enraged at the murder of Pilaji Gaikwad, rose everywhere against the vicerey. Pilaji's brother, Mahadji, marched from Jambusar on Baroda and took it by storm (1732) and made it what it is still, namely, the Maratha capital of the province. Damaji Gaikwad, Pilaji's eldest son, advanced from Songadh and after reducing eastern Gujarat invaded Jodhpur itself and forced Abhai Singh to hasten to the defence of his hereditary dominions. Once back in Jodhpur, he gave himself up to intoxication and ceased to pay any attention to the affairs of his vicerealty. The emperor relieved him of his post and appointed in his place Najib-ud-Daulat. But Abhai Singh's deputy refused to surrender Ahmadabad and Najib-ud-Daulat called to his aid Damaji Gaikwad. The latter took the last stronghold of the Moghuls and occupied it with his troops. Gujarat was thus wholly lost to the empire (1735).

Nor did Malwa fare better. On the flight of Mahomed Khan Bangash, the emperor appointed as his successor Raja Savai Jaising of Jaipur (1734). But the Rajput chiefs no longer deemed it an honour

to serve the Moghul. They now aspired to complete independence and fancied that they saw in the growth of the Maratha power the best means to obtain it. After some desultory operations against Bajirao, the raja of Jaipur pressed the emperor to appoint in his place the Peshwa as viceroy of Malwa. The emperor was unwilling to resign, without a further effort, one of his richest provinces. Distrustful with good reason, of the capacity of most of his officers, he thought that he saw in Muzaffir Khan the brother of his Vizier Khan Dauran, the qualities of a skilful captain. With Muzaffir Khan the emperor sent his household troops and no less than twenty-two generals. These with their staffs made on the parade ground an appearance so splendid, that no Maratha troops, so Muzaffir Khan imagined, would dare to face them. Bajirao allowed the imposing array to advance unopposed through central India as far as Sirony, realizing that the farther they advanced, the more difficult would be their retirement. At Sirony he attacked the imperial forces in the traditional Maratha manner, cutting off Muzaffir Khan's supplies and rendering useless his cavalry by false attacks and innumerable raids. At last Muzaffir Khan was obliged to appeal to his brother for help. For a time he received nothing but long Persian despatches<sup>1</sup> full of brilliant couplets and witty abuse of the Nizam and the Marathas. Realizing at last that Muzaffir Khan needed help, more substantial, Khan Dauran sent what remained of the Delhi troops and with great difficulty succeeded in rescuing his brother and his beleaguered army. Khan Dauran now decided to take the field in person. After wasting several weeks in the neighbourhood of Delhi, he reported that the Marathas were nowhere to be seen. At the same time, however, the emperor learnt from the plunder of some towns, only two hundred miles from Delhi, that they had by no means returned to the Deccan. At last both the emperor and his minister thought that it would be better to give up Malwa and Gujarat, if by so doing they could save the northern provinces. But Bajirao, in the full tide of success, would not sell peace save at a price that even the trembling emperor hesitated to give. He no longer demanded the mere governorship of Malwa. He demanded the alienation of the whole province together with Allahabad, Benares, Gaya and Mathura. In addition he asked for an immediate payment of fifty lakhs or an assignment to that amount on Bengal, as well as an hereditary grant of five per cent of the Deccan revenues. In other words he asked for nearly all that remained to the emperor of Hindustan together with a ground for constant interference in the governments of Bengal and the Deccan. The emperor would only agree to the grant of five per cent on the revenues of the Deccan. The Nizam had long ceased to pay him anything and nothing would have pleased him more than a quarrel between the rebel viceroy and the Maratha leader. Negotiations were broken off and hostilities again began. To reinforce his army, the emperor withdrew his troops from the north-western passes. Mahomed Khan Bangash was also ordered to attend with his Rohillas. Khan Dauran took command but, as

<sup>1</sup> *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin*

before, he moved his army backwards and forwards in such parts of the country as he knew to be free from Maratha horse. Bajirao, who regarded the imperial commander with just contempt, moved in every direction, as if no army opposed him. He levied a large contribution from the raja of Bhadavar, while Malharrao Holkar with a great body of horse crossed the Jamna and sacked the towns of Akbarabad and Sayadabad. In the imperial army there were neither courage nor capacity, but Sadat Khan, the governor of Oudh, had still some enterprise left. In March 1737 he surprised Malharrao Holkar and inflicted on him a severe reverse.<sup>1</sup> Holkar fled across the Jamna, losing a number of men in the crossing. With the remains of his army he rejoined Bajirao. Sadat Khan wrote to Delhi so exaggerated an account of his success that the emperor and his advisers thought that all danger had passed and that the few Marathas who had escaped from Sadat Khan's sword were fleeing in all haste to the Deccan. When this absurd story reached Bajirao, he observed grimly 'I shall prove to the emperor that he has not heard the truth, by showing him Maratha horse and burning villages at the gates of Delhi.'<sup>2</sup>

Sadat Khan had by this time joined Khan Dauran and seems to have become infected by that commander's insolence. The two generals camped on the Ajmer road, some sixty miles from Delhi. Instead of pursuing the recent success, they spent several days in celebrating it by banquets and supper parties. While they were still commemorating Sadat Khan's victory, Bajirao, marching at great speed, got between the Moghul army and Delhi and began to plunder the capital. He pitched his camp at Tughlakabad, the city of Ghazi-ud-din-Tughlak, of which the giant walls still overawe the casual spectator. On account of some local festival in Bhavani's honour, Tughlakabad happened to be full of pilgrims and pleasure-seekers and pious persons, both Hindus and Musulmans, from Delhi. These the Marathas, regardless of their victims' piety, robbed of all they had. Bajirao then moved his camp to the Kutb Minar, where the column erected by Emperor Kutb-ud-din looked down with dismay on the presumption of the infidels. After plundering the town wherein dwelt once the Afghan emperors, he then moved nearer Delhi and camped in the south-western suburbs, where a viceregal palace, more splendid than any of its imperial forerunners, now raises its towers. The fugitives of the sacked towns rushed into Delhi and filled the capital with their clamours. The emperor ordered one Amir Khan to march against the Marathas with every soldier in the city. Bajirao sent out a few horsemen to meet Amir Khan and concealed his main army. This common Maratha artifice tempted one of Amir Khan's generals, a Sayad named Mir Hussein Khan, to charge out into the open plain. Directly Mir Hussein Khan and his men were beyond the range of the cannon on the Delhi walls, the Maratha horse under Malharrao Holkar and Ranoji Sindia wheeled round, killed and wounded six hundred

<sup>1</sup> *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin*.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix B, Bajirao's letter to Chimnaji Appa.



imperialists, including Mir Hussein Khan, and drove the rest back into the city.<sup>1</sup>

It was, however, impossible that Bajirao should remain where he was. Messengers had at once been sent to Sadat Khan and Khan Dauran. Immediately after his defeat of Mir Hussein Khan, the Peshwa learnt that the two generals were hastening back to join Amir Khan with the main Moghul army. Unwilling to risk a pitched battle so far from his base and with Nizam-ul-Mulk on his line of communications, Bajirao decided to accept the imperial offer of the viceroyalty of Malwa.<sup>2</sup> Sacking as he went the towns of Rivadi and Basoda (1736) he retreated into central India and thence into the Deccan.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### THE WAR AGAINST NIZAM-UL-MULK AND NADIR SHAH'S INVASION

A D. 1737 AND 1738

NIZAM-UL-MULK had been watching with concern the extraordinary progress of the Maratha arms. The stern old soldier feared that the emperor, who had never forgiven his desertion, might well confer on Bajirao the government of the Deccan. The Nizam would then have to defend his province against the united onslaught of the Marathas and the imperial army. He had, during Bajirao's recent campaign, adopted so threatening an attitude that Bajirao had written to his brother Chhinnaji Appa, ordering him to watch with a large force the Nizam's movements. 'If he attempts,' wrote the anxious Peshwa, 'to cross the Nerbada, fall instantly on his rear and put heel-ropes on him.'<sup>3</sup> The threat of an attack from Chhinnaji's army kept the Nizam within his own borders. But after Bajirao's retreat he let the emperor know that he was again willing to serve and to defend, so far as lay in his power, the Moghul throne. Danger had softened Mahomed Shah's hatred of Nizam-ul-Mulk and he sent to the viceroy several flattering messages and an imperial decree by which he raised the Nizam to the command of eight thousand horse and graciously invited him to return to court. On June 22, 1737, the veteran statesman appeared at Delhi.

The emperor and his courtiers vied with each other in their deference to the pardoned rebel, and in spite of his recent gift to Bajirao of the government of Malwa, he gave both it and the viceroyalty of Gujarat to the Nizam's eldest son Ghazi-ud-din and placed at the Nizam's disposal all the remaining resources of the empire. But so low had these resources fallen that only thirty-four

<sup>1</sup> *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin*

<sup>2</sup> Grant Duff mentions also a promise to pay thirteen lakhs. I have not been able to find any authority for this, although it is very likely correct.

<sup>3</sup> Grant Duff. The great historian must have seen the letter given in the appendix to the last chapter. The phrase occurs there.

thousand men could be gathered to his banner. To remedy his lack of troops the Nizam sent for his entire train of artillery. At the head of his new army he crossed the Jamna at Allahabad and against Kalpi. He entered Bundelkhand and, after seizing the persons of Raja Chatrasal's sons, he marched southwards. With him were the raja of Kotha, one of the few Rajput chiefs who still adhered to the Moghul cause, and Safdar Jang, the nephew of Sadat Khan and ancestor of the kings of Oudh. He is still recalled to English tourists by the beautiful mausoleum built by himself on the road between modern Delhi and the Kutb Minar. Bajirao hastened to meet him and with no less than eighty thousand men came up with him at Bhopal. This city was once surrounded by a sheet of water so large that those who saw it exclaimed that in the whole world it only was rightfully entitled to the name of lake.<sup>1</sup> All other so-called lakes were but ponds. Scattered through this inland sea were islands extensive enough to bear whole villages, while on its shores rose innumerable temples that daily resounded with the chants of Buddhist saints of both sexes. The Musulman invaders in their fanaticism destroyed the lake and converted its bed into an endless succession of wheatfields, ricefields and pastures. A pool, hardly two miles long, survived the ruin and with it to guard his rear and a river to guard his front the Nizam awaited Bajirao's onset. He should have moved out to meet the Marathas, but he doubtless lacked confidence in the imperial troops, who had so often fled before their present enemy. He stayed in his camp and soon found himself besieged, as he had been on the Godavari. His guns again saved him. Whenever the Marathas charged home, his passed batteries swept them away. Nevertheless, Bajirao foiled every attempt of the Nizam to extend his lines. At last Malharrao Holkar and Yashwantrao Powar succeeded in getting between Safdar Jang's contingent and the Nizam's camp and forced Safdar Jang to retreat northwards. The Nizam wrote for help to Delhi, but in vain; for Khan Dauran was now openly rejoicing in his rival's failure. He wrote to his son Nasir Jang, whom he had left as his deputy at Hyderabad, and the latter made every effort to send reinforcements to his father's help. But the Nizam's supplies had become so straitened that the old soldier resolved to wait no longer, but to extirpate himself at any cost. He piled his baggage within the walls of Bhopal and tried to retire towards Delhi under cover of his cannon. The Marathas strained every nerve to stop him, but his gunners stood by their guns and with storms of cannon-shot broke up and dispersed every hostile formation. Nevertheless, the Nizam's retreat did not exceed three miles a day. On reaching Seronj, he learnt that the Persian king Nadir Shah had invaded India. The news seemed to the Nizam so serious that he resolved to buy off Bajirao at almost any price. The latter had at one time been so sure of capturing the Nizam and his whole army, that he had refused all offers; but his troops had suffered so from the Nizam's cannon, that he also had become willing to negotiate. On February 11, 1738, the

<sup>1</sup> *Tel to Bhopal tel aur sub talava*

generals signed a treaty. By it the Nizam gave to Bajirao not only Malwa, but all the territory between the Chambal and the Narbada.<sup>1</sup> He further promised to obtain from the emperor, if he could, fifty lakhs by way of indemnity. He obstinately refused, however, to pay any indemnity himself.

Having bought off the Marathas by this humiliating convention, the Nizam marched to Delhi to help the emperor against his new and even more terrible enemy. The origin of Nadir Shah, king of Persia, was of the humblest. In the reign of Shah Hussein, the last shah of the Safavi dynasty, the Ghilzai Afghans had invaded Persia, taken Herat and captured the shah himself inside the town of Isfahan. His son Tamasp escaped and fled to the shores of the Caspian. There he called in the aid of one Nadir Kuli, a freebooter, who had carried on unremitting warfare against the Afghan conquerors. The alliance of the freebooter and the heir to the crown proved irresistible. The Ghilzais were driven from their conquests and their king killed. Not only was Persia liberated, but Kandahar was in its turn taken by the Persians. A quarrel, however, occurred between Tamasp and Nadir Kuli, with the result that Tamasp was deposed by his troops and the freebooter crowned shah in his place. Nadir Shah's victories brought the Persian monarchy to the borders of the Moghul empire, which at the time included Kabul. The necessities of the Maratha war had forced Mahomed Shah to withdraw most of his troops from his northern frontier and his minister Khan Dauran had misappropriated the pay of those who remained. Nadir Shah, on the pretext that the Indian government had refused to surrender some Ghilzai fugitives, advanced on Kabul, which he took with little difficulty from the starving and mutinous garrison. He crossed the Indus at Attock and entered Lahore. On January 15, 1739, the distracted emperor ordered Nizam-ul-Mulk to join him and advanced on Karnal in the southern Punjab. Nadir Shah skilfully eluded the Moghul outposts and surprised the Oudh troops under Sadat Khan. Khan Dauran hastened to the latter's assistance, but fell in action. The rest of the imperial soldiery were driven into their fortified camp and starved into submission. Mahomed Shah sent Nizam-ul-Mulk to open negotiations. The Nizam induced Nadir Shah to promise to retire on payment of an indemnity of two crores of rupees (£2,000,000). But Sadat Khan's jealousy frustrated the Nizam's efforts as an envoy. Sadat Khan told the Persian king that if he marched to the capital, he could easily extort a ransom a hundred times greater, and Nadir Shah insisted upon escorting the unfortunate Mahomed Shah back to Delhi (February 1739). On the day after their entry into the imperial city, a rumour spread that Nadir Shah was dead. Instantly the mob rose upon his troops. All night the shah strove to restore order, but in the morning he lost his self-control and called in his entire army to massacre the citizens. According to the popular legend often illustrated by Indian artists, Nadir Shah seated himself in the mosque of Rukn-ud-Daulat

<sup>1</sup> The Nizam really assigned to Bajirao the province of Malwa with its borders largely extended.

in the great bazaar and, drawing his sword, bade his men not to cease from slaughter until he had replaced it in its scabbard. For several hours he thus sat gloomy and silent, while the helpless Indians were exposed to the savage fury of the northern barbarians. About midday the emperor and his nobles by continued tears and intercessions, induced the shah to sheathe his sword and the carnage, such was the discipline of the Persian troops, instantly ceased. Having glutted his vengeance, Nadir Shah turned again to the question of the indemnity. He seized all the imperial treasures and jewels, including the celebrated peacock throne. He then seized the property of the nobles and bade his officers extort what they could from the common citizens. The order was eagerly obeyed. Every house, wherein imagination could picture wealth, was invaded and its owners brutally tortured. To use the graphic words of the Musulman historian <sup>1</sup> 'Before, it was a general massacre, but now the murder of individuals. In every chamber and house was heard the cry of affliction. Sleep and rest forsook the city.' After fifty-eight days even Persian greed realized that the city contained nothing more of value and the shah decided to return to Persia. Before he left, he married his son to a Moghul princess descended from Shah Jehan, placed a worthless crown on Mahomed Shah's head and sent a letter to Bajrao warning him to give due obedience to his imperial nominee <sup>2</sup>. He then departed, leaving Delhi in ashes and the Moghul empire a ruin.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE CONQUEST OF THE KONKAN WARS AGAINST THE SIDIS AND THE PORTUGUESE

A D 1733 TO 1739

At this point I must return to the narrative of Maratha affairs within those provinces which, although inhabited by a Marathi-speaking population, were yet under the dominion of foreigners. During Aurangzib's conquest of Maharashtra, the Sidis had given him valuable help both by land and sea. In return he had bestowed on them Mahad, Dabhol, Raygad and a number of other strong places along the Konkan coast. The Sidis' possession of Raygad was peculiarly offensive to the Maratha monarchs; for it was full of memories of the great king. It was at once the symbol of his sovereignty and the seat of his worship. These political considerations were aggravated by a personal quarrel between one of the Sidis, Sat Sidi by name, and one Brahmendraswami. The latter has by some of his admirers been compared with Ramdas and he certainly enjoyed during his lifetime great consideration from the king and the eminent men who surrounded him. Brahmendraswami's father was Mahadev Bhat, a

<sup>1</sup> Scott, *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> Nadir Shah's letter is given in the Appendix.

Deshasth Brahman from Berar. His mother's name was Umabai. They had an only son whom they called Vishnu. When the boy was twelve years old, both his parents died. From his earliest years he had been devoted to the worship of the god Ganpati and he had the strange gift of passing every year into a religious trance from the first of *Shrawan* (July) to the fourth of *Bhadrapad* (August) a period of thirty-four days. In 1663 Vishnu went to Benares. There he became an ardent follower of the god Vishnu, his namesake, and he assumed the title of Brahmendraswami. After some years he left Benares and, wandering from the Himalayas to Rameshwaram, visited every Indian shrine in turn. At last he came to Loharashtra and settled near Chiplun at Parashuram village, where one time had stood a noble temple to Parasu Rama, the sixth incarnation of Vishnu. It had now fallen into ruins. Close by was a beautiful wood called the Dhamni wood. To it, every *Shrawan*, Brahmendraswami retired in order to pass into his trance or perform his religious meditations. His piety and his penances first attracted the notice of the neighbouring villagers and then spread far and wide. The saint had early been acquainted with Balaji Vishvanath and with remarkable foresight had prophesied his rise to the highest office. As Brahmendraswami's fame grew, he devoted himself to the collection of funds for the restoration of Parasu Rama's temple. Nor were his persuasive powers exercised only on his co-religionists. The chief of the Sidis, Rasul Yakut Khan, so revered the saint that he gave him the revenues of the villages of Ambdas and Pedhi and lent him the services of two clerks, Bapujipant and Dhondopant Tambe. In the struggle between Shahu and Tarabai, Brahmendraswami had the wisdom to join the king and later to support the claims of Balaji Vishvanath to the post of first minister. The grateful Peshwa induced the king to bestow on him Dhawadshi, a village near Satara. With its revenues and those of the villages given him by Sidi Rasul and of Davale and Mahling given him by Parashuram Trimbak, Brahmendraswami soon restored to its former splendour Parasu Rama's temple and laid down a gorgeous and elaborate ceremonial for the worship of the god. The saint's cordial relations with Sidi Rasul Yakut Khan were interrupted by an unfortunate misunderstanding. A certain Sidi, Sat Sidi by name, had by Rasul Yakut Khan been appointed governor of Anjanvel on the southern bank of the Dabhol creek. It so happened that Sat Sidi had received from the nawab of Savanur a gift of a remarkably fine elephant; but between Savanur and Anjanvel stretched the Maratha country. It was certain that in ordinary circumstances the elephant, if sent by the nawab of Savanur, would never reach its destination. Sat Sidi implored the help of Brahmendraswami. It happened that the anchorite was about to start for the Carnatic to beg money for his temple. With great courtesy, he offered to bring back the nawab's gift. On his return journey he took the beast with him and got it safely through the Vishalgad pass into the Konkan. Thinking that its dangers were over, he sent it on ahead. Beyond Sangameshwar, however, some of Kanhoji Angre's forest guards, learning that it belonged to one of the Sidis, captured it and sent it to

Jaygad, one of Angre's forts Brahmendraswami was much distressed at the incident and wrote to Kanhoji Angre a strong letter of remonstrance. The latter was a disciple of the saint. He at once ordered the elephant's release and expressed deep regret for his subordinate's action. In the meantime Sat Sidi had heard of the animal's capture. He sent a force against Jaygad which Angre, who had not then received the letter of his spiritual guide, attacked and defeated with heavy loss. Sat Sidi became still more incensed and formed the belief that the capture of the elephant was part of a deep plot of Brahmendraswami. In February 1927, on *Mahashivratri* day, the god Shiva's festival, he made a sudden raid on the temple of Parasu Rama. He pulled it down stone by stone, plundered it of all its treasure and tortured such Brahman priests as he could catch, to make them point out any wealth that they had been able to hide. Conduct so ungrateful would have annoyed any one, and in the celestial mind of Brahmendraswami it aroused inextinguishable anger. He sent the elephant to Sat Sidi and with it a fearful curse. 'You have wrought evil on the gods and the Brahmans,' he wrote, 'and similar evil may they wreak on you.' In vain Rasul Yakut Khan expressed his deep sorrow at the outrage, made Sat Sidi restore his plunder, promised to rebuild the temple and offered as compensation the revenues of two more villages. In vain Kanhoji Angre begged the *swami* to forgive and forget the past. In 1728 the infuriated anchorite shook from off his feet the dust of the Konkan and, ascending the ghats, went to live in Dhavadshi. There he was cordially welcomed by Shahu, his queens and the Maratha nobles. Until the end of his life he never ceased to preach a crusade against the Abyssinians and to urge on the king the disgrace of their presence on the shores of his kingdom.

The known friendship of Brahmendraswami for Balaji and Bajirao was sufficient to set in motion against any suggestion of his the intrigues of Shripatrao Pratimidi and of the Deccan Party. Kanhoji Angre, moreover, threw into the scale his powerful influence. For the previous ten years he had been friendly to the Sidis and had no wish to exchange their friendship for war. In 1729, however, Kanhoji Angre died and was succeeded in the office of high admiral by his eldest son Sekhoji. From contemporary accounts the latter seems to have been a man of exceptional character and talents. He regarded with disfavour his father's kindly feelings for the sea-kings of Janjira. The Sidis, aware of his dislike for them, announced that their treaty with the Angres had been ended by Kanhoji's death and ravaged Sekhoji's territories. Another incident made Brahmendraswami's task the easier. In 1733 Sidi Rasul Yakut Khan died. He left a number of sons of whom the following, Abdulla, Sambul, AmLar, Rahyan, Yakut and Hasan, were the eldest. Although Abdulla was the first-born, desire for their father's throne inspired against him the hatred of his brothers. Abdulla secretly sought help from the Maratha king. Shahu sent into the Konkan a Prabhu *sardar*, Yashwantrao Mahadev Potnis, to foment the family quarrel. Potnis not only did this with success, but also corrupted a certain Sheikh Yakub Khan, a daring sailor who possessed the full confidence of the

sea-kings. He was of the lineage of the ancient Koli monarchs and was the hereditary *patil*, or headman, of Gohāgad. Potnis offered to Sheikh Yakub Khan, as the prize of a successful revolution, the command of the fleet and an ample portion of the Sidis' lands. Last of all Abdulla's son, Abdul Rahman, who aspired to oust his father and uncles, fled from Janjira and openly asked Potnis for help. The Prabhu *sardar* reported his success to Shahu, who at once summoned Bajirao to Satara. So excited was the king, that he began his order with the words 'Do not read this letter. Mount your horse and then read it'.<sup>1</sup> On the arrival of the first minister he and the king discussed the plan of campaign. Finally Shahu ordered that the *Pratimdhū* should take a force into the Konkan. Afterwards Bajirao and Fatsing Bhosle would join him there. Owing to the slowness of the *Pratimdhū*, Bajirao and Fatsing Bhosle were ready to start before him. In April 1733 they descended the Sahyadris. The *Pratimdhū* did not follow them until the end of May. Hearing that Sidi Masud was about to start for Janjira with help from Surat, Shahu wrote both to Umabai Dabhiade and to Damaji Gaikwad and commanded them to seize Sidi Masud and prevent his sailing. Lastly the king sent two thousand Mawalis from his own bodyguard to assist his commanders in the capture of the Sidis' forts. So anxious, indeed, was Shahu to learn at the earliest the successes of his captains, that he had a line of runners posted between their camp and the capital. In this way he daily received their despatches.

But in spite of the ardour of the king, the royal forces achieved nothing commensurate with his hopes and preparations. Yashwantrao Dabnade and the Gaikwads refused to take any part in the campaign. From the first Bajirao showed little interest in the expedition, which he thought a waste of time and money. The *Pratimdhū* sulked and refused to help Bajirao. At first the Marathas won some important successes. In May 1733 Bajirao repulsed an attack led by Sidi Rahjan, in which the leader and a hundred of his men fell. He also took the forts of Tala and Gossala and plundered Rajpuri, Nagothna and other towns of the Sidis. About the same time Manaji Angre, Sekhoji's younger brother, inflicted a severe defeat on the Sidis' fleet near Janjira. On June 8, 1733, Bajirao retook Raygad amid the universal rejoicings of the Maratha people. The historic fortress, the capital of the great king, had been taken by Aurangzib in October 1789 and had for over forty-three years been in the possession of the Abyssinians. At the end of June, Sekhoji Angre took the fort of Raval on the Pen river and the fort of Thal close to Bombay. But these advantages were more or less nullified by the murder of Sidi Abdulla, on whose help the Marathas had counted in their final attack upon the island. Rid of their brother, the remaining Sidis defended themselves with stubborn courage and held in a firmer grip Anjanvel, Govalkot, Vijaydurg and Janjira. The English, too, became alarmed at the near approach of the Marathas

<sup>1</sup> *Patra-na-vachanen. Ghodyavar basanen, mag patra vachanen (Riyasat, Vol. II, p. 271).*

and were incensed by Sekhoji Angre's capture of an English ship called the *Rose*, which he held to ransom for 7,603 rupees. The chief hope, however, of the Sidis lay in the jealousies of the Maratha captains. It was in vain that Shahu reprimanded his generals; it was in vain that Brahmendraswami refused to plunge into his annual religious trance. Still their bickerings continued. In August 1733 the Sidis amused the *Pratimdh* with pretended offers of peace. At the same time they attacked and defeated a Maratha division under Bankaji Naik at Chiplun. They then broke off their negotiations with the *Pratimdh* and inflicted on him two severe reverses. The unlucky commander appealed to Shahu, who ordered Chimnaji Appa to take him reinforcements. On various pleas Chimnaji Appa put off his obedience to the order, until the exasperated king wrote to him that, unless he started at once, he, the king, would take over the command of his division. The English now resolved to give substantial help to the Sidis. They supplied Janjira with food, guns and munitions and sent under Captain Haldane on the warship *Mary* a force to help the Sidis defend their island fort of Underi, which Sekhoji Angre was besieging. In September 1733 Sekhoji Angre, the most single-minded and loyal of the Maratha captains, died and Sambhaji Angre was raised to his dead brother's office of high admiral. From this moment all hopes of taking Janjira vanished. Sambhaji Angre and his brother Manaji Angre were on bad terms and would not work together. Shahu fearing to give offence, would not appoint a single commander-in-chief, but sent separate orders to each divisional general and tried to conduct the campaign from his palace at Satara. Although Shahu had written to Chimnaji Appa that he was not to return to Satara without having taken Janjira, the king had reluctantly to bow to the inevitable. The alliance of the English with the Sidis had robbed the Marathas of the command of the sea. It was therefore better for the Marathas, so Bajirao advised, to secure their present advantages by a treaty with the sea-kings than drag on a useless war. In December 1733, the Sidis and Bajirao signed a treaty. The Sidis resigned to Abdul Rahman, as his share in his grandfather's kingdom, the revenues of eleven and a half *mahals*. The Marathas retained Raygad, Tala, Gossala and the other forts that they had stormed.

Brahmendraswami, as it may be imagined, was deeply disappointed at the treaty. He was not, however, to lose his revenge. His old enemy Sat Sidi was no less dissatisfied at the close of the war. Had it but continued, so he thought, it would have ended in an Abyssinian victory. In spite of the execution of the treaty, he continued to raid the territories ceded to the Marathas. Early in 1736 he brought his fleet to the port of Rewas and tried to take the fort of Sagargad. On March 10, 1736, Shahu despatched Chimnaji Appa to punish the aggression. On April 19, a battle was fought at the village of Charai near Rewas. In it the Sidis were defeated and slain. With him fell the commandant of Underi and eleven thousand men. Shahu was overjoyed and he wrote to Chimnaji Appa, 'Sat Sidi was a demon no less terrible than Ravana; by killing him you have uprooted the



Sidis. Everywhere your fame is spread abroad.' Summoning to his court the young general, he showered on him presents and robes of honour. Brahmendraswami was equally lavish in his encomiums and until his death in 1745, he derived from his enemy's downfall a great and pious satisfaction.<sup>1</sup>

The Portuguese were an even more formidable enemy. It had only been after once taking and losing the city that they had finally, in 1510, established themselves at Goa, but they soon established friendly relations with the kingdom of Vijayanagar and were at constant war with their Musulman neighbours. Their chief foes were the kings of Gujarat, who had made themselves independent on the break-up of Mahomed Tughlak's empire. They did not aim, as the French and English afterwards did, at large inland conquests. They desired mainly the trade of the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf, and for that purpose wanted a chain of commercial posts or factories along the western coast. They principally coveted Diu, or Diu, a small island off the coast of Kathiawar. It commanded the Gulf of Cambay and, almost due west of Surat, formed a convenient stage on the homeward and outward journeys and a safe anchorage during the May storms. For the same reasons Bahadur Shah, the king of Gujarat, was unwilling to part with it. War ensued, during which the Portuguese attacked the cities held by the king of Gujarat along the western seaboard of the Maratha country. In 1530 Antonio de Silveira and in 1533 Diego de Silveira harried the whole seacoast from Bandra to Surat, taking no less than four thousand captives, whom they made to work at the churches and convents of Goa. To prevent a recurrence of this piracy, Malik Tokan, a Gujarat officer, built a strong fortress at the mouth of the Ulhas river close to the little village of Vasai. As soon as the Portuguese heard of the new fortress, they determined to destroy it. A Portuguese general, Nuno de Cunha, stormed it and razed it to the ground. But a new enemy now threatened Bahadur Shah. The daring and restless Humayun was about to invade Gujarat. Bahadur Shah begged the Portuguese to become his allies. As the price of their friendship, he offered them Bombay and Mahim, Diu, Daman, Chaul and Vasai. The Portuguese readily accepted the generous offer and gave Bahadur Shah such valuable aid, that in 1535 Humayun retreated to Delhi. The Portuguese next set themselves to the task of exploiting their acquisitions. Chaul and Diu they converted into strong fortresses. Daman became a thriving port. But on Vasai they bestowed special favour. Although a small village, the Hindus prized it as a seat of the worship of the god Shiva, who had an ancient temple on Tungar hill (to the east of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway). Its foundation had been the outcome of a struggle between the god and the demons.<sup>2</sup> A body of evil spirits led by one

<sup>1</sup> *Riyasat*, Vol. II, p. 289.

Brahmendraswami had a friendly feeling for the English. (Parasnis, *Brahmendraswami Charitra*, p. 111). With Chinnaji Appa in this battle was Pilaji Jadhav the ancestor of the Jadhav Sirdars of Wagholi (*Ulhas Sangraha*, Sept. 1910, p. 64).

<sup>2</sup> Da Cunha, *Antiquities of Bassam*.

Vimala had been harassing the Brahmans, who lived to the east of the Sahyadris, which then still marked the limits of the Arabian Sea. The Brahmans called to their aid Parasu Rama, or Rama with the Axe, who hunted into the sea Vimala and his confederates. As he ran away, Vimala took on his head one of the spurs of the Sahyadris. Planting it in the sea, he gave it the name of *tungar*, which in the Sanskrit tongue means hill. He had, however, learnt wisdom from his defeat and on Tungar hill he so propitiated by his penances and his adoration the god Shiva, that the deity gave him immortality on condition that he left the Brahmans alone. The demon chief agreed and built in the great god's honour a temple on Tungar hill, wherein he worshipped Shiva under the appellation of Tungareshwar, or God of the Mountains. All went well, until one day Vimala heard a band of anchorites praise Parasu Rama. Vimala became so wroth at hearing the praises of his deadly enemy, that he forgot his promise to Shiva. Running at the anchorites, he drove them away and, putting out their holy fire, spoilt their sacrifice. The anchorites again invoked Parasu Rama, who once more made war on Vimala. But although he repeatedly struck off Vimala's arms and legs, they instantly grew again because of the immortality bestowed on him by the god Shiva. Parasu Rama then went in person to Shiva and pointed out that Vimala had broken his promise and had forfeited the divine boon. Shiva was convinced and, abandoning his follower, he gave Parasu Rama the *parasu*, or axe, from which he derives his name. With this formidable weapon Parasu Rama soon hewed Vimala in pieces.

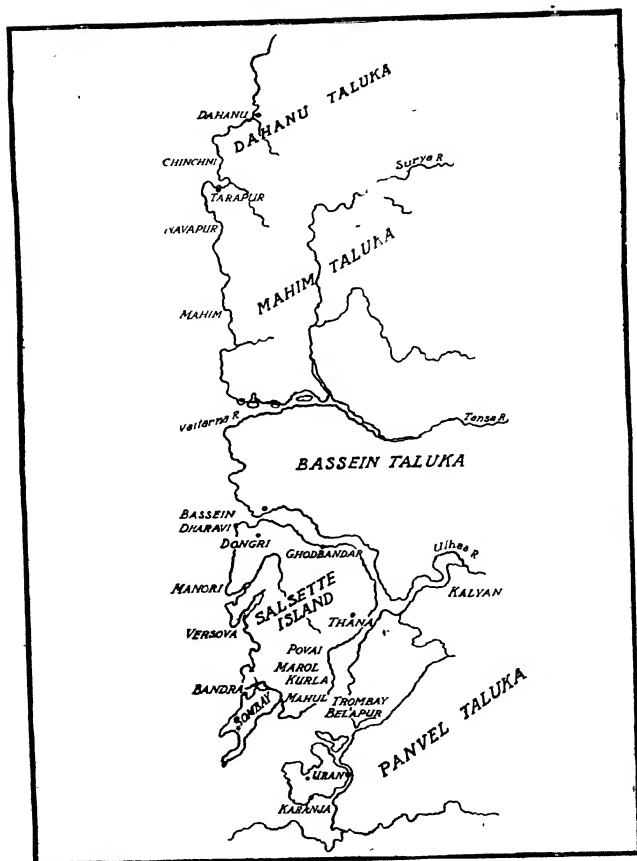
Ignorant of this holy legend, the Portuguese corrupted the name Vasai to Baçaim, a word which the English again corrupted to Bassein. They made it the capital of their new acquisitions, called by them The Province of the North and governed by an officer styled The General of the North. Nor was Bassein, apart from its sanctity, unworthy of its new masters' favour. The wide mouth of the Ulhas river issuing from hills that recall in their beauty the Highlands of Scotland, enabled ships to take their merchandise far inland. Another branch of the same stream flowed southwards into the magnificent harbour of Bombay. The delta of the Ulhas river which the Portuguese occupied as an appanage of Bassein was known as Sasashti, or the *Island of sixty-six villages*. This word the Portuguese corrupted into Salcete and the English into Salsette. Its fertile soil, watered alike by the river and by abundant rains, yielded rich harvests of wheat, maize and rice, and dotted among the yellow cornfields could be seen an endless succession of mango groves, orchards and banian trees. There the Portuguese settled in great numbers and, enriched by trade and agriculture, built themselves stately palaces and charming villas. So great indeed was the prosperity of Bassein, so abundant the wealth of its inhabitants and so lavish the display of costly dresses and splendid equipages, that in common parlance the city was known as Dom Baçaim or Lord Bassein. In 1661 the king of Portugal gave to the English the islands of Bombay on the southern point of Salsette, as the dowry of Catharine of Braganza, the queen of Charles II. From that time began the decay of Bassein. The English East India

Company, to whom Charles transferred Bombay, proved themselves formidable trading rivals. But a more pressing danger was the rise of the Maratha power. I have already related Sambhaji's siege of Goa, and from that time forwards the Marathas and the Portuguese carried on a desultory warfare. In 1730 a Maratha army had threatened the island of Salsette and had been repulsed with difficulty. Eventually, through the mediation of Robert Cowan, the British Governor of Bombay, a treaty of perpetual peace was signed by the viceroy of Goa and the Maratha king. The danger to which the Portuguese had recently been exposed caused the viceroy, John Saldanha da Gama, to hold an enquiry into the defences of Salsette. The report of the commissioner Coutinho revealed the most lamentable neglect, due, it would seem, to the system of administration, under which all munitions and supplies were left to the control of the Jesuits. Da Gama sanctioned a large sum of money to put Salsette in a proper state of defence, but he returned to Europe before he had completed his task. His successor was the Count of Sandomil. He came with strict instructions to carry out the plans of the late viceroy and no doubt wished to do so. But his endeavours were thwarted by a fate so unhappy that the Portuguese sought for an explanation in some supernatural event. At last it was remembered that when landing from his ship, he had put his left and not his right foot first on the soil of India.

It must be admitted that his policy was calculated to aid the influences of destiny. The key of the island of Salsette was the fortress of Thana. It was an old Moghul outpost and just as Chester derives its name from *Castrum* so Thana took its name from the Marathi word *Thanen* a fortified post. It was essential that a Portuguese viceroy, who wished to embark on a vigorous foreign policy should see to it that Thana was impregnable. If Thana could not be made impregnable, it was wisest not to give offence to one's neighbours. The Count of Sandomil did indeed order that Bassem and Salsette island should be fortified and gave the work to a distinguished engineer Jose Lopes de Sa. But by the time that the fortifications of Bassem were finished, the money allotted was exhausted and the wall round Thana was never completed. Unhappily about this time the quarrels of Kanhoji Angre's sons seemed to offer to the Count of Sandomil a chance of extending the territories of Portugal and of regaining some of her ancient renown.

Kanhoji Angre had left two legitimate sons Sekhoji and Sambhaji. As it will be remembered, Sekhoji succeeded without opposition to his father's honours. When Sekhoji died in September 1733 his rank and possessions passed to his legitimate brother Sambhaji. But Kanhoji had also left four illegitimate sons Yesaji, Manaji, Tulaji and Dhondji. Early in 1734 Sambhaji planned the capture of Anjanwel from the Sidis. He took with him his third brother Tulaji. Yesaji he left behind at Suvarnadurg. He put Dhondji in charge of Kolaba fort, and to Manaji he entrusted his fleet. Manaji was ambitious and unscrupulous. He disliked the subordinate charge assigned to him and offered to cede to the Count of Sandomil the fortress and lands

of Revadanda not far from Chaul, in return for Portuguese support. Unhappily the viceroy had not the strength of mind to refuse the bribe and promised Manaji a Portuguese contingent. Manaji, thereupon, imprisoned and blinded Yesaji and declared himself independent. Sambhaji hastened to the spot, but was beaten off by the Portuguese. The danger past, Manaji refused to surrender Revadanda and the viceroy recalled his troops. Sambhaji again attacked Kolaba. Knowing that he would not again get help from the Portuguese, Manaji appealed this time to Bajirao, offering him the forts of Kothala and Rajmachi. The Peshwa had long regarded with a jealous eye the power and independence of the Angres. He affected to treat the quarrel between Sambhaji and Manaji as an ordinary civil dispute between two members of a joint Hindu family. He summoned before him the brothers and decided that Manaji was entitled to Kolaba, as his share of his father's inheritance. It was now Sambhaji's turn to call in the Portuguese. He promised to cede to them either Revadanda or an equivalent elsewhere and give them back all the Portuguese vessels taken by his father. The viceroy accepted Sambhaji's offer, because, as he explained to his government, it seemed the only way by which he might recover the cost of the first expedition. He did not realize that he was beginning a war that would increase the cost of the expedition a thousandfold. Before moving to Manaji's help, the Peshwa insisted that he should be put into possession of Kothala and Rajmachi. On the surrender of the two forts, he hastened with a large force to the relief of Kolaba. He defeated Sambhaji and his Portuguese allies and drove Sambhaji back into Suvarnadurg. At the same time he declared war against the Goa government. The viceroy was by this time utterly weary of his alliance with the Angres and offered terms of peace. Bajirao, whose aspiring mind revolved vast schemes of conquest elsewhere, was glad to accept them and both parties signed a treaty. It contained a clause that the Portuguese should give the Marathas a site for a factory on Salsette island. The site was to be chosen by the General of the North. Unhappily for the Portuguese, the General of the North was at this time Luis Botelho, the viceroy's nephew. He was a young man of parts and courage, but of a violent temper. He had already quarrelled with the Jesuits and with many of the leading citizens of Bassein. When he learnt that he had to select inside Salsette a site for a Maratha factory, he resolved not to do it. For a long time he put off the Marathas with fair promises. At last Bajirao, suspecting his good faith, sent to Botelho as his special envoy his brother-in-law, Vyankatrao Joshi, better known as Vyankatrao Ghorpade. This distinguished man, the ancestor of the present Chief of Ichalkaranji, was the son of one Naropant Joshi, a Chitpavan Brahman, whose father Mahadji had died while Naropant was only five years old. Mahadji's widow obtained support from the kindness of Mhaloji Ghorpade and brought up her son to be a priest of Ramchandra, the family god of the Ghorpades. But Mhaloji's son, the famous Santaji Ghorpade, saw with a captain's eye the delight Naropant took in horses, arms and equipment, and made the boy a trooper in his squadron. From that time on the boy



MAP SHOWING SALSETTE ISLAND AND  
OTHER PORTUGUESE POSSESSIONS

was Santaji's devoted admirer and so faithful was he in his service, that Santaji bade him call himself his son and take the name of Ghorpade. One day, so the story runs, Santaji's wife to tease the boy bade him, as Santaji's son, eat off the same dish as his father. Had Naropant done so, he would have lost his Brahman caste. Nevertheless he readily offered to forfeit it, if his father wished it. Santaji Ghorpade was too high-minded to exact such a sacrifice; but from that time on, he regarded Naropant always as the son of his loins. Naropant's son was Vyankatrao. When Balaji Vishvanath was still a subordinate, he was glad to marry his daughter to Vyankatrao. In this way Vyankatrao came to be the brother-in-law of Bajirao. As they grew up, the brothers-in-law took opposite sides in politics. Vyankatrao took the side first of Shivaji and then of Sambhaji of Kolhapur. He was taken prisoner by Shripatrao, the *Pratinidhi*, at the battle on the Warna in 1730 and was thrown into prison as a rebel. In the end, as I have already related, Bajirao ransomed him. Vyankatrao was now ordered to demand from Luis Botelho the instant cession of the promised site. Luis Botelho, unable any longer to put off the fulfilment of the viceroy's undertaking, lost his temper and so far forgot not only the courtesies of diplomacy but those of ordinary social life, as to call, to Vyankatrao's face, the handsome and fair-skinned Bajirao a negro. Vyankatrao at once broke off the interview and returned to Bajirao who, deeply incensed, determined to avenge the insult without delay.

As a number of towns and strong places will be named in the ensuing account of the fighting and as the geography of the place has greatly changed, it will be as well to sketch as briefly as possible their positions. Due east of Bombay was the fortified island of Karanja. To the north of Karanja lay the islands of Gharapuri and Turambe, now known as Trombay. To the north of Bombay was the island of Vandra or Bandra. At the mouth of the Panvel creek stood the town of Belapur. Nearer Thana were Anjur and Kelve. These last were inhabited chiefly by Pathare Prabhus, who had had religious quarrels with the Portuguese and had appealed to Bajirao. To the east of Bandra was the strong place of Marol. Off the coast between Andheri and Bassein was a row of islands. To the west of Goregaon was the fort of Vesava, called by the Portuguese Varsova. Beyond Varsova again was Malad, of which the *inamdars* Antaji Raghunath and Ramchandra Raghunath were in secret correspondence with Bajirao. Near Bassein was the fortified island of Dharavi. On the opposite bank to Bassein but a little further up stream was the fort of Ghorbandar, which guarded the southern mouth of the Ulhas river. Beyond Bassein was the fort of Tarapur and the towns and talukas

<sup>1</sup> This curious incident is to be found in a letter written to the king of Portugal by Antonio de Alcacova. It is reprinted in a serial study of the siege of Bassein entitled *Os ultimos cinco generaes do norte* by Mr. J. A. Ismael Gracias-O Oriente Portugueza, Vol. III, p. 288. Antonio's words are as follows. 'A seus commissarios em Baçaim foras pelo general des compostos de palavras injurias excedendo o escandalo de faltar com vituperio do Bagi Rao, tratando o de Negro.'

of Mahim, Dahanu and Ambargaon and the posts of Shirgaon and Chinchni. On the shore near Bassein was the fort of Arnala. To the north-east were Manora and Asheri. Prior to Coutinho's report, the fortifications of all these towns were in ruins and weakly garrisoned. Bassein had ninety guns but only twelve gunners. The cavalry numbered eight and the infantry eight only. The wall had in places fallen down. The fort of Varsova was small, old and ruined. It had a garrison of fifty men and ten guns, but only two of the pieces were serviceable. The walls at Manora were not more than six feet high. Of its eight guns five were useless. Asheri had a garrison of a hundred and fifty broken-down old men. The fort at Belapur had four companies of a hundred and eighty men each and fourteen guns, none of them very formidable. Mahim fort had a garrison of sixty, of whom only seven were Portuguese. At Tarapur were sixty men and twenty-three guns but no artillerymen. Coutinho's report led to the repair of the walls of Bassein and the strengthening of its garrison. For lack of means little was done to the other strong places except Thana. But its walls, as I have mentioned, were never completed.

With great speed, secrecy and diligence Bajirao collected a large force at Poona under the pretence of a more than usually elaborate festival in honour of the goddess Parvati. He induced the king to appoint Chimnaji Appa generalissimo. The latter on his appointment sent first a thousand men under Ramchandra Joshi and Khandoji Mankar to Kalyan, where they were joined by detachments under Narayan Joshi, Antaji and Ramchandra Raghunath. Chimnaji Appa drew up the bulk of his force at some distance from Belapur. Skillfully as these preparations were hidden, it was impossible wholly to conceal them; and John Horne, the British Governor of Bombay, warned Luis Botelho that large Maratha forces were collecting in the neighbourhood of the Province of the North. He might have saved himself the trouble. He received from the general the haughty reply that when the barbarians came, he would know how to receive them. Luis Botelho, however, made no preparations for their reception. On the night of April 6, 1737, the Maratha troops began an attack on Thana fort. At the sound of the guns, Chimnaji Appa came up with the bulk of the army. Before he could arrive, the advanced troops had swept through the unfinished walls of Thana. The Portuguese garrison, after repulsing two attacks, died fighting gallantly at their posts. Chimnaji Appa, delighted with this success, renamed the fort of Thana the Fateh Buruj, or the Tower of Victory. The Maratha columns now poured into Salsette. Narayan Joshi stormed the neighbouring fort of Parsik and the island of Dharavi. About the same time Shankarji Keshav took the fort of Arnala. Another party escalated Ghorbandar. Before morning all that remained to the Portuguese of Salsette was the island fortress of Bandra. This the English, anxious for their own safety, helped to defend. Indeed had the Marathas after taking Arnala at once attacked Bassein, it is not impossible that that stronghold might have fallen too. Other counsels, however, prevailed and the Marathas devoted themselves to the reduction of minor strongholds. Before the rains began, they had

taken Mandvi, Manora and Belapur as well as a number of other villages. On July 1, 1737, Chimnaji Appa, leaving a considerable force under different commanders to invest Bassein, returned to Poona.

The viceroy of Goa, deeply concerned at the disaster, relieved his nephew of his command and sent in his place a gallant old soldier named Antonio Cardim Froes. He had left Portugal in 1698 and had risen from the lowest rank to the highest office. He reached Bassein on May 23, 1737, and the veteran's presence revived the sinking spirits of the Portuguese. On August 27, a Maratha force, eight hundred strong, made an assault on Bandra but was repulsed with great slaughter by the garrison who only numbered a hundred and fifty. At the end of September, Bajirao thought that the time had come for a general assault on Bassein. He first took the covering fort of Sabais. The commandant defended it bravely until his water-supply failed and he was forced to capitulate. On the same day storming parties simultaneously attacked Bassein and Varsova. Nine thousand Marathas succeeded in reaching the walls of Bassein and put against them forty scaling ladders. But the Portuguese stood at bay with a resolution that would not have shamed the companions of Lorenzo d'Almeida. The Maratha ladders were thrown down and the Maratha soldiers who reached the top of the walls were either killed or taken. At Varsova, too, victory rested with the besieged, and the Portuguese cannon took a fearful toll of the storming parties. The General of the North, however, complained bitterly of the English, who, pleading neutrality, refused him their help. At the same time they sold gunpowder and cannon-balls stamped with the English mark to the Maratha generals.

After the failure of the assaults, the siege languished and the Lisbon government sent out two transports, the *Nossa Senhora da Victoria* and the *Bom Successo*, full of Portuguese soldiers. Thus reinforced, the General of the North was able to relieve Mahim, several miles to the north of Bassein, with a strong force under Pedro de Mello. Arriving by sea they surprised the Marathas in their trenches and put them to the sword. Pedro de Mello shortly afterwards relieved Asherin, called by the Portuguese Asserim, which had been reduced to the greatest straits. Antonio Cardim Froes now thought himself strong enough to begin a vigorous offensive and planned nothing less than the recapture of Thana. The recapture of this place, so he justly thought, would completely disconcert the Maratha staff and would probably result in the retreat, if not surrender, of the Maratha troops within Salsette island. On September 12, 1738, four thousand five hundred soldiers, of whom five hundred were pure-blooded Portuguese, sailed in transports from Bassein and through the harbour of Bombay up the Thana creek. Led by the gallant Pedro de Mello, they attacked the important strategic point known as the Forte dos Reis, or the Fort of the Kings. On the other hand the Marathas had also received large reinforcements. After Bajirao's return from northern India the Maratha leaders hastened to the Portuguese war, so that Chimnaji Appa had now a fine army at his disposal; and in command of Thana fort was no less a soldier than the redoubtable Malharrao Holkar.



Still, had the Portuguese secret been kept, the attack might well have succeeded. But John Horne, the Governor of Bombay, on seeing the Portuguese transports, sent an express messenger to warn the Marathas. At the same time he allowed a few of his English gunners to pretend to desert to them, so that they might help the Marathas to point their guns. Thus the Portuguese found the Marathas fully prepared. Their artillery, directed by the English gunners, mowed down the Portuguese, and a cannon-ball fired, so the Portuguese believe,<sup>1</sup> by an Englishman killed Pedro de Mello as he tried bravely to rally his men. The Portuguese broke and fled back to their ships.

In the beginning of the year 1739 the viceroy relieved Antonio Froes and appointed Martinho da Silveira to be General of the North. His task was a formidable one. The Marathas had renewed the siege of Mahim and, early in January 1739, took it by storm after a most gallant defence.<sup>2</sup> At the same time Bajirao resolved to dam the stream of reinforcements that flowed from Goa to Bassein. On January 23, 1739, Vyankatrao Ghorpade, the envoy insulted by Luis Botelho, invaded Goa territory with twelve thousand horse and four thousand foot-soldiers. In his efforts to save Bassein the Count of Sandomil had left himself few Europeans, but without their support the native levies would not face the Marathas. On January 25, Vyankatrao took

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff writes that it was Antonio Froes who was killed, but Mr Ismael Gracias has declared this to be a mistake and that the general who fell was Pedro de Mello. Grant Duff maintains that the Portuguese belief that de Mello was killed by an Englishman, is incorrect. He does not quote the authority on which he relies. On the other hand the charge was made in an official letter written by the viceroy on January 4, 1739, to the Governor of Bombay, from which I quote the following passage — 'Quando a nossa armada foi a atacar o forte dos Reys, soccorreo ao Maratha com tres condestaveis ingleses e essa certeza tenho de Bombaim e tambem de pessoas de Ilha de Salcete que me certificao o mesmo e que hum dos condestaveis forao que fizero tiro com que matarao ao general' — *O Oriente Portuguez*, Vol III, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> Parasnis' industry has discovered a letter, dated December 13, 1738, in which Vasudev Joshi reported to Chimnaji Appa an unsuccessful attack on Mahim.

'Ramchandra Hari and Mahadji Keshav trained batteries on Mahim. Two or three days later Portuguese and Abyssinians came in hundreds of boats to assist in the defence. The enemy was very strong, we trained our batteries on the northern wall of Mahim. On the south, the Kelve side, we did not attack. The enemy fell back behind his fort walls. On November 10, Ramchandra Hari with 700 or 800 men attacked Kelve. They killed 25 to 30 of the enemy. One of our horsemen fell and two horses were wounded. Thereafter the enemy, seizing the opportunity, attacked our batteries with 1,500 to 2,000 men. At the same time he opened a tremendous cannonade from the fort and set fire to our guns. We had no room to deploy. Ramchandra Hari, Amarsing Shirke and others with 10 to 15 horsemen attacked the enemy and killed about 15 of them. Ramchandra Hari killed two with his own hand and so checked them. Just then a bullet hit him in the right hand. He dropped his sword and, as it fell, it wounded him on the knee. Thereupon our men gave way and the enemy captured our batteries. Mahadji Keshav, Vaghoji Khanwalkar and other high officers were in the batteries. They had no time to escape and so fell fighting. About 200 of our men were killed and about 100 wounded. Unable to bear the reproaches of Bajirao, they threw away their lives and fell on the battlefield.'

Parasnis, *Brahmendaswami Charitra*, p. 78.

Margao by escalade and laid siege to the fortress of Rachol, the key of Goa. The viceroy reinforced the commandant of Rachol as best he could. But a sortie under an inexperienced officer ended in a serious disaster and Sandomil was compelled to fill the ranks of the garrison by calling to arms the monks and priests of Goa. By the aid of these new conscripts, Luis de Caetano, the commandant of Rachol, repulsed in February 1739, a vigorous assault of seven thousand Marathas. In spite, however, of occasional Portuguese successes, the end was now certain. Each month brought the viceroy news of fresh disasters. For a short time Nadir Shah's invasion gave the Portuguese hope, for Bajirao, on the news of the sack of Delhi, thought of nothing less than an alliance of every state in India against the Persian barbarians. 'The war with the Portuguese is as naught,' wrote the Peshwa. 'There is now but one enemy in Hindustan. The whole power of the Deccan, Hindus and Musulmans alike, must assemble, and I shall spread our Marathas from the Nabada to the Chambal'.<sup>1</sup> But so great were the resources of Bajirao that he could provide both an army to besiege Bassein and another large enough to drive Nadir Shah from Delhi. The viceroy of Goa learnt of the fall, one after another, of the Portuguese strong places dotted throughout the Province of the North. Quelme, Sirgaon, Tarapur, Dahanu were taken by storm and the garrisons put to the sword. Varsova and Karanja surrendered. Banda was abandoned. Indeed but for a change in the Bombay Government, Bassein would have been starved into submission. But John Horne's successor, Stephen Law, had different ideas about a neutral's duties. He refused to send to either side guns or ammunition, but he sent quantities of provisions by sea to Bassein and with this aid and their own dauntless courage, the Portuguese prolonged the defence beyond all expectation. Martinho da Silveira, the new General of the North, claimed descent from Antonio da Silveira,<sup>2</sup> the hero of the defence of Diu against the Turks; and he vowed like his reputed ancestor that so long as he lived, the flag of Portugal would never be hauled down from the ramparts of Bassein. On April 15, 1739, the valiant Silveira met a soldier's death in the bastion of Nossa Senhora dos Remedios. A cannon-ball struck him in the body and killed him instantly. Caetano de Souza Pereira succeeded to the command, but after Silveira's death the Marathas made greater progress. Their army, according to Portuguese accounts, now numbered two hundred thousand men, and by May 13, 1739, they had after repeated failures succeeded in mining the tower of Nossa Senhora dos Remedios. At 7 a.m. on May 13 the explosion of two mines partially destroyed the bastion. The Marathas rushed to the attack, but were driven back by the valour of the garrison and the explosion of a third mine caused them heavy losses. Throughout the day the Maratha leaders, Chimnaji Appa, Manaji Angre, Malharrao Holkar and Ranoji Sindia, vied with each other in trying to scale the walls of the doomed city. They delivered no less than eleven assaults

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff.

<sup>2</sup> The ancestry was apparently doubtful,

on the tower of San Sebastian and six others on that of Nossa Senhora dos Remedios. The Portuguese repulsed them with hand-grenades and musketry fire. During the night the besieged made a curtain of lighted firewood inside the latter tower and barricaded the breaches in the tower of San Sebastian with broken doors and disused hen-coops. On May 14, the explosion of a fourth mine laid the tower of San Sebastian level with the ground. The Marathas established themselves in the ruins of the masonry and enfiladed the garrison. All day the Portuguese defended themselves with the courage of despair. In the evening a Maratha envoy bearing a white flag told Pereira that in the morning three fresh mines would be fired, the town carried and the Christian population put to the sword. Pereira called a council of war. The officers reported that the troops were exhausted and unfit any longer to man the walls. No succour could be expected from Goa, and Pereira decided to make terms while this was still possible. In the hour of victory the Marathas showed commendable generosity. They allowed the garrison eight days in which to leave Bassein with the honours of war. British ships took them to Bombay where the governor, Stephen Law, entertained them hospitably and furnished them with money. In September 1739 he sent them in native boats to Chaul, where they arrived in time to repulse the assault of a Maratha army that had been besieging it for some months previously. But the troubles of the war-worn garrison were not yet over. Having saved Chaul, they set out for Goa. When only two hours' march from their journey's end, they were attacked and routed by the Savant of Savantvadi with the loss of two hundred of their best men.

Directly Bassein had fallen, Holkar and Sindia hastened northwards to join Bajirao in his march against Nadir Shah. But the Persian king had already retreated and the Marathas were at liberty to concentrate their armies round Goa. Nevertheless they did not besiege that city with the same vigour as they had besieged Bassein. They entered into negotiations with the Portuguese, demanding in return for peace the cession of Chaul, Daman and a quarter of the revenues of the province of Goa. The mediation of the English softened their demands. They agreed to grant peace upon the cession of Chaul in addition to the conquests that they had already made. The Portuguese lessened the shame of the surrender of Chaul by ceding it to the English, who in turn ceded it to Bajirao, who bestowed it on Manaji Angre. The Marathas admitted that in the siege of Bassein they had lost five thousand men. The Portuguese claimed that their enemies' losses amounted to twelve thousand. Their own losses did not exceed eight hundred. Nevertheless by the cession of Bassein, Chaul and the island of Salsette they paid a heavy price for Botelho's unworthy insult.

One part of the story still remains to be told. Sambhaji, whose quarrel with Manaji had been the first cause of the hostility between the Portuguese and the Marathas, had seen his allies overthrown without lifting a finger to help them. When the Maratha army left the neighbourhood, he again attacked his brother Manaji, took Chaul

and Alibag, and laid siege to Kolaba. Manaji once more invoked Bajirao's help. To Manaji's relief Bajirao sent his son Balaji, the future Peshwa and Chimnaji Appa and induced the Governor of Bombay to aid in the enterprise. The siege of Kolaba was raised. Chaul and the other places taken were recovered and Sambhaji escaped with difficulty to his fortress of Suvarnadurg.

The defeat of the Portuguese left the English and the Marathas face to face. It must be admitted that the conduct of the English was based on no consistent policy. They tried to please both sides and pleased neither. The Portuguese were angry with them for warning the Thana garrison, and Chimnaji Appa resented the help given by Stephen Law to the Portuguese. The Company decided to send two missions, one to Chimnaji Appa and one to the Maratha king. On May 12, 1739, Captain Gordon left Bombay for Shahu's court. On the same day Captain Inchbird went to Bassein, to remove from Chimnaji Appa's mind his unfavourable impressions and to induce him to abandon a projected expedition against Bombay. Chimnaji Appa received Captain Inchbird coldly and hinted that the Company's object in sending two missions was simply to create ill-feeling between him and the king. Captain Gordon met with better fortune. On May 13 he reached Danda Rajpur. There he was received in state by the Sidis. On the next day he again started, this time by sea, but on the day following he was arrested by the Marathas. After seeing his papers, they released him. A similar experience befell him on May 19. On the next day Captain Gordon began to ascend the Ghats. On May 23 he reached Satara, but the king had gone towards Miraj. On May 25 Antajipant, the agent of the *Pratimadhi*, called on Gordon, presented him with a dress of honour and received in return a ring. On June 1, 1739, the English envoy reached Shahu's tents. On June 3 Captain Gordon called on the *Pratimadhi*. The latter asked him a few questions about Bombay and inquired mockingly whether it was fear of Bajirao that had sent him. On June 8 the envoy succeeded in reaching the king. But he transacted no business. While he was in the royal presence, a letter came from Bajirao to say that Nadir Shah, according to rumour, intended to march against the Marathas. Shahu, disgusted at the news, pulled off his turban and, flinging it on the ground, cried out, 'I lost twenty thousand men at the siege of Bassein. Will Bassein give them back to me?' The rumour, however, proved false. On June 14 the king in open darbar proclaimed that Nadir Shah through fear of the Marathas had fled the country. On June 19 the victorious Vyankatrao returned from the siege with the pleasing intelligence that the Portuguese had accepted the king's terms. Cheered by this news, Shahu on June 25 again sent for Captain Gordon and, receiving him far more graciously, gave him leave to go, and said on parting, 'Tell my friend the Governor to be so kind as to send me eight geese, a pair of turkeys, a pair of Basra pigeons and any other rare birds that he may have.' He also condescended to admire the sword of the envoy, who with ready courtesy begged the king to accept it. Shahu was so pleased at the gift, that on June 27, he for the third time required Gordon's presence and said, 'You English are good, honest

people. You have no aims other than trade. You never persecute any one for his religion. You English will be very useful to us in our new conquest of Bassem."<sup>1</sup> He then informed the envoy that he had entrusted this part of his business to Bajirao. He, however, wrote to the Peshwa commanding him, if possible, to make friends with the English. This order the Peshwa obeyed and granted the English peace and free trade.<sup>2</sup> Captain Gordon had thus attained his object and on June 30 he set out for Bombay.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### SHAHU TAKES MIRAJ, THE DEATH OF BAJIRAO AND THE SUCCESSION OF HIS SON BALAJI

A.D. 1739 TO 1740

THE reason why Captain Gordon did not find Shahu at Satara was a curious one. The successes of the king's generals were the pride of the Maratha nation. Nevertheless much as they applauded the royal victories, the peasantry and burgesses could not help whispering to each other that in Shivaji's time his battles had been won by his own valour and skill and not by the generalship of his subordinates. Shahu had abundance of courage, but he disliked the fatigues of a campaign. In this view he was encouraged by his flatterers, who repeated to him that a king so great as he was could only take the field if opposed by the emperor of Delhi in person. At last, however, the murmurs of the commonalty reached the royal ears and the king decided that he would cast aside his faded laurels and deck himself with fresh ones. The town of Miraj had from Aurangzib's time held a Moghul garrison. It lay in the heart of the Maratha country and is now the capital of the Chitpavan chief of Miraj. It was easy for the Marathas to attack it and difficult for the Nizam to defend it. The king, therefore, resolved to take it and by this achievement convince his people that the burden of administration alone prevented him from emulating his grandfather's renown on the battlefield. The Miraj campaign, however, resembled a royal procession rather than a military expedition. The daily march rarely exceeded four miles.<sup>3</sup> The royal tents were almost as splendid as those of Aurangzib, and indeed the state held and the etiquette observed were based on imperial precedent. The king and his high officers rode on elephant-back inside splendidly decorated howdahs. In front of the elephants went innumerable batteries of artillery. In front of the batteries marched picked infantry and in front of them chosen squadrons of Maratha horse. Behind the king were massed the royal musicians, who beguiled the tedium of the march by tunes on immense brass war-horns. Then came drummers on horseback,

<sup>1</sup> Parasnis, *Brahmendraśwami Charitra*, p. 111.

<sup>2</sup> Aitchison, *Treaties*, Vol. XIV.

<sup>3</sup> *Rajasar*, Vol. II, 349 *et seq.*

war-elephants, innumerable cavalry and countless regiments of infantry. With due pomp and circumstance the king at last reached Umbrej, which he made his permanent headquarters. Thence Shahu sent a small force into the Carnatic and gave himself up to the pleasures of the chase. A month or two later he sent the *Pratinidhi* to attack Udayi Chavan, who was plundering the neighbourhood. This task the *Pratinidhi* successfully achieved and brought Udayi Chavan a prisoner into the royal presence. Not until the end of 1739 did Shahu decide to move against Miraj. He sent against it an army of thirty thousand men, commanded by Appajirao Pingle, the son of that Bahiro Pingle, whom he had dismissed from the office of Peshwa. Miraj fort was strong and the garrison resisted stoutly. At last Shahu, losing patience, went to Miraj in person. Having reconnoitred the position, he ordered the *Pratinidhi* to make a general assault on the following day. The assault was preceded by a violent cannonade, which made a breach in the north-eastern tower. The Maratha infantry, fired by the king's presence, cut their way through the breach and made themselves masters of Miraj. They lost a hundred and fifty killed and fifty wounded. The king followed up his success at Miraj by some operations against freebooters in the neighbourhood. Triumphant in all of them, Shahu returned to his headquarters at Umbrej. There he dismissed his officers and went with a small retinue to Chaphal,<sup>1</sup> where at Ramdas' shrine he gave thanks for his victories. Last of all he returned in splendid state to his palace at Satara and erected *gudis*, or maypoles, throughout the city to celebrate his victorious campaign. His joy, however, was soon to be darkened by the death of his first minister.

Bajirao had been successful in all his wars and had defeated in turn the armies of Delhi, of Nizam-ul-Mulk and of the Portuguese. He was so fortunate as to meet death in the very height of his glory. On July 29, 1739, he returned to Poona. On September 3, Chimnaji Appa came there also after his successful campaign against the Portuguese. Bajirao's son Balaji had been with Shahu at the siege of Miraj. On November 4 he joined his father and uncle. On the return of Balaji, he, Bajirao's mother Radhabai and Chimnaji Appa united in urging Bajirao to get rid of Mastani, a Musulman mistress to whom he was devotedly attached. Several stories are told how this lovely girl came into Bajirao's possession. One is that Chatrasal of Bundelkhand gave her as a gift to Bajirao. The second tale is that the Nizam gave her as a present to the great minister. The third story is told by the author of the Peshwa's *Bakhar*. According to him Mastani had been the mistress of a certain Shahajat Khan, a Moghul officer at one time in command of an imperial force in central India. Chimnaji Appa surprised Shahajat Khan and among other spoil took captive Mastani. The lovely girl would have taken poison, but Chimnaji Appa promised her Bajirao's protection and sent her to his brother. Bajirao fell deeply in love with her, but Mastani was as prudent as she was pretty and would not accept Bajirao's advances,

<sup>1</sup> There is a shrine of Ramdas at Chaphal as well as at Parali.

until he had promised that any son born of their union would receive a fitting share in his father's possessions.

A fourth and more probable account has been given in the Marathi Monthly *Itihas Sangraha*. According to the learned author,<sup>1</sup> Mastani was the daughter of Raja Chatrasal by a Musulman mistress. As a return for Bajirao's help Chatrasal gave Mastani to Bajirao. Whatever her origin, all the stories agree as to her wit and beauty; and the chief attraction in the festival held by Bajirao in honour of Ganpati, his family god, was the singing and dancing of this Indian Salome. Nor was she less daring than lovely. She accompanied Bajirao on many of his campaigns. On one occasion he so far forgot etiquette as to take her with him to Satara, when he went to pay his respects to the king, a piece of conduct which drew on him a reprimand royal from the indignant Shahu. As the years passed, the minister grew so infatuated with the beautiful dancing-girl, that he neglected his wife Kashibai. It was this infatuation which led his brother Chimnaji Appa, his mother Radhabai and his son Balaji to protest against his behaviour. He paid no heed to them. At last, early in November 1739, his brother and his son, fearing that his attentions to Mastani were undermining Bajirao's health, removed her by force and imprisoned her in a single room in the Shanwar Wada. The minister retired gloomily to Patas. But the beautiful and spirited courtesan would not resign her empire without a struggle. On November 24 she escaped from prison and rejoined her lover. Her enemies followed her and again successfully used their power to separate the minister and his mistress. Weary of the struggle, Bajirao decided to seek on the battlefield that peace of mind which he could not find in his own home. An excellent excuse existed for a fresh campaign against the Nizam. In 1728 by the treaty of Mungi Shevgaon, the Nizam had promised to Bajirao a substantial private *jaghire*, but he had failed to keep his promise. The Nizam was away at Delhi, but his son Nasir Jang was in the Deccan and could easily have granted the *jaghire*, had his father wished it. On December 12, 1739, Bajirao reviewed his troops and set out from Poona to enforce this part of the Mungi Shevgaon treaty. A few days later Chimnaji Appa joined him with a large contingent. Nasir Jang, hearing at Aurangabad of the invasion, marched with forty thousand men to oppose it. The armies met on the banks of the Godavari and for two months an indecisive struggle raged up and down the river. At last Bajirao forced Nasir Jang to retreat to Aurangabad and take shelter in the fort. Nasir Jang was soon closely besieged. At last, he sued for peace and gave Bajirao in *jaghire* the districts of Handia and Khargoni south of Indore. Bajirao had thus attained the object of the war. He sent Chimnaji Appa back to Poona. His son Balaji he sent to Kolaba, that he might try and settle the endless disputes of the Angre brothers. He himself, with the interest of a new proprietor, went northwards to Khargon and spent the winter there, inspecting his *jaghire*, and mastering the details of its administration. Suddenly at Raver, as he was touring along the banks

<sup>1</sup> Rao Bahadur Parasnis.



MASTANI





of the Narbada, he fell of fever. His frame, exhausted by war and labour, harassed by family quarrels and disappointed passion, was unable to resist the attacks of disease. On April 25 he passed away at the age of forty-two in the presence of his younger son Janardhanpant and his faithful and forgiving wife Kashibai. The news reached Balaji at Kolaba and he and Chinnaji Appa were present at the funeral ceremonies. With them went Mastani. Separated from her lover in this world, she passed fearlessly through the flames to greet him in the next. Kashibai survived her husband for many years. In 1746 she went on a pilgrimage to Benares. On November 27, 1758, she died greatly mourned and respected, having lived to see her son reach an eminence far loftier even than that attained by Bajirao.<sup>1</sup>

By his wife Bajirao had four legitimate sons, Balaji, born on December 8, 1721, Ramchandra, Raghunath, born on August 1, 1734, and Janardhan. By Mastani he had one illegitimate son. Bajirao wished ardently that his mistress' child should be declared a Brahman. But powerful although he was, he could not break down the opposition of the priesthood. Hinduism accepts no converts, and the son of a Musulman concubine could never be invested with the sacred thread. Bajirao was reluctantly forced to bring him up in his mother's faith. He became a Musulman and was named Shamsheer Bahadur. As a soldier he was renowned for his ardour and courage. In 1761 when only twenty-one years of age, he fell fighting bravely on the field of Panipat. He left a son Ali Bahadur, whom Nana Phadnavis sent to Malwa in the hope of checking the formidable rise of Mahadji Sindhia. This Ali Bahadur failed to do. But he made himself master of a considerable tract of country and became the ancestor of the nawabs of Banda.

Judged by any standard, it can hardly be denied that Bajirao was a great man. His person was commanding, his skin fair, his features strikingly handsome. So widespread was his reputation for beauty that, according to a Maratha legend, the ladies of Nizam-ul-Mulk asked of their lord as a special favour that they might at his next meeting with the Brahman minister, unseen themselves, catch a glimpse of his fine presence and classic features. At the same time his dress was simple and his fare was as meagre as that of any trooper in the field. An amusing story runs that once the emperor, Mahomed Shah, curious to learn something of the appearance of the great soldier who was overrunning his dominions, sent his court artist to paint him. The artist brought back a picture of Bajirao on horseback in the dress of a trooper. His reins lay loose on his horse's neck and his lance rested on his shoulder. As he rode, he rubbed with both hands ears of corn which he ate, after removing the husks. The emperor in great alarm cried, 'Why, the man is a fiend', and at once begged the Nizam to make peace with him. Bajirao lacked the attractive courtesy for which the other members of his house were noted. His manners were overbearing. His letters often contained

<sup>1</sup> Bajirao was born in 1693 (Sardesai, Vol. II). Rajwade gives the date as 1686, wrongly as I think.

censure, but never praise. Indeed he seems rarely to have written save to reprimand a subordinate. In spite of his eminent talents he was not liked by the king and he was detested by the Deccan nobles. He was feared, not loved, even by his own children.

The monument of Bajirao most familiar to Englishmen in Poona is the ruin of his house the Shanwar Wada, or the Saturday Palace. Eight years after his elevation to the office of Peshwa he formed the design of building it. Two years later he put his design into execution. Two reasons have been handed down by legend for his choice of the site. One is that he saw on it a dog pursued by a hare and therefore assumed that the dwellers on that spot were invincible. The other is that his horse stumbled there and that from this incident he concluded that it was the wish of Providence that he should remain in the neighbourhood. A more probable reason was the favourable situation of Poona, watered by two rivers and sheltered alike by Sinhgad and Purandar. It was alive, too, with memories both of the great king and of Balaji Vishvanath. It was at Poona that Shivaji had passed his boyhood, and Balaji had at one time been *Sarsubha* of the town and district.<sup>1</sup>

Close to the Muta river stood an old Musulman fort which had long fallen into disuse and decay. This Bajirao pulled down as well as two villages which stood close by and which the king, at his request, gave him. The first stone was laid on January 10, 1730, and the palace was completed on January 22, 1732. It was called the Saturday Palace, because it was on a Saturday that the earth-spirit was appeased by the burial of a living victim beneath the projected site, and it was on a Saturday also that the foundation stone was laid. The palace itself no longer exists as it was destroyed by fire on February 21, 1828, but descriptions of it have survived. It cost Rs. 16,110 to build. It was six stories high and had four large and several smaller courtyards. The main courtyards were known as the Granary Court, the Dancing Court, the Kitchen Court and the Sweetmeat Court. There were no less than seven great reception halls. They were known as (1) the Gokak Hall, so called because its walls were hung with toys made in Gokak, (2) the Nach, or Dancing Hall, because in it the dancing girls beguiled the tedium of the Peshwa's leisure hours, (3) the Mirror Hall, so named because the walls and ceiling were entirely covered with mirrors, (4) the Kacheri Diwankhana, or Court of Audience, it was here that the Peshwa in later years received his ministers and the ambassadors of other powers, (5) the Ivory Hall, because of its ivory ornamentation, (6) the Ganesh Diwankhana, it was here that the Peshwa worshipped his family god Ganpati on Ganesh *Chaturthi*, the festival of the god's birthday, (7) Narayanrao's Hall, which did not, however, obtain this name until the murder of Narayanrao, many years after Bajirao's death. The main northern entrance with its massive walls and protecting bastions was not built until after Bajirao's son Balaji had made himself master of the kingdom. The tale runs that when Bajirao was about to build the northern wall, King Shahu sent him a polite but at the same time

<sup>1</sup> Sardesai, *Riyasat*, Vol. II, p. 25.

significant message. In it he begged Bajirao not to build it, for fear of alarming the emperor of Delhi, towards whose throne the new fortification would look. That part, however, of the building which most excites human interest is the Mastani gate, which led into the apartments specially built by Bajirao for his beautiful courtesan.

The death of Bajirao was on December 17, 1740, followed by the death of his younger brother Chimnaji Appa. He had long been ailing and had often expressed the fear that he would not live to see the fall of Bassem. Indeed he had ordered his generals that, if he died, they should ram his corpse into one of their cannon and fire it into the hostile city. Thus in death, if not in life, Bassem would be his dwelling place. In spite of failing strength, he had never spared himself, and so long as the flag of Portugal waved over the Bassem ramparts, Chimnaji Appa's ardent spirit overcame the ills of his body. When Bassem felt the reaction came. On September 10 he wrote to Brahmendraswami, 'Lately I have been greatly worried by an incessant cough. I suffer from pain all over my body. It is this that has kept me from writing to you for the last four days. With the *swami's* blessing I hope to get well.' This hope was never realized. In October 1740 he felt so ill that he returned to Poona. Day by day his cough grew worse, until on December 17 he died in the thirty-fourth year of his age. He was born in 1708, being ten years younger than Bajirao. His first wife, Rakmabai, the sister of Trimbakrao Pethe, died on August 31, 1730, shortly after giving birth to their son, Sadashivrao. On December 9, 1731, he married his second wife Anapurnabai. By her, he had a daughter Bagabai, who married Gangadharnaik Onkar. Anapurnabai was devoted to her husband and proved her devotion by burning herself alive upon his body.

The fame of Chimnaji Appa has been overshadowed by that of his elder brother, yet his talents were, it is probable, in no way inferior to those of Bajirao. On the other hand Chimnaji Appa's was the far more attractive personality. His mind was bent towards study. His manners were pleasing. His temper was sweet and reasonable. It often happened that the Deccan nobles, unwilling to approach the haughty first minister and to risk a sharp, discourteous refusal, reached their object by winning to their cause Chimnaji Appa, against whose persuasive pleading even Bajirao was rarely proof. Nay, at times the king himself stooped to adopt the device of his nobles. It was to Chimnaji Appa that Bajirao's children turned for that affection which their father, led away first by his ambitions and afterwards by his passion for Mastani, denied them. While Bajirao incurred gigantic debts for the upkeep of his armies, Chimnaji Appa checked with strict economy the household expenses. It was Chimnaji Appa who saw that Bajirao's sons were educated, were invested with the sacred thread, were united to suitable wives and taught the high morality and noble truths of the Hindu faith. While Chimnaji Appa had in abundance the humble virtues, he in no way lacked either physical or moral courage. It was he who defeated and killed Sat Sidi, and but for his perseverance and energy Bassem would most likely never have fallen. His moral courage stood a searching test when he dared

to interfere with Bajirao's intrigue with Mastani. He not only rebuked his elder brother, but twice forced him to dismiss his beautiful mistress and return to the embraces of his wife and children. His early death was a profound calamity for the Maratha people. Had he lived longer, he would doubtless have controlled the quarrels of Raghunathrao and Sadashivrao, both of whom revered him as their father, and thus saved his country from the disaster of Panipat. His wisdom would have guided the counsels of Balaji, checked the ambitions of Holkar and Sindia and preserved his nation from those unhappy rivalries, which more than aught else brought about the downfall of Maratha independence.

On the death of Bajirao, the Deccan Party made a fresh effort to stop the hereditary prime ministership of the Bhat family. The leader of the Deccan Party was now Raghujii Bhosle. He was not a man of great capacity, but he was a personal favourite of King Shahu. He was a bold horseman and a keen hunter. When Kanhoji Bhosle, the heir of Parsoji Bhosle, fell under Shahu's displeasure, the king conferred on Raghujii Bhosle his cousin, the post of *Sena Salub Subha*, till then held by Kanhoji. A long enmity had divided the royal favourite and the first minister. When Bajirao had surrounded the Nizam at Bhopal, Raghujii Bhosle sacked Allahabad, a part of India which Bajirao deemed that he alone had the right to plunder. In return Bajirao had sent one Avaji Kavade to plunder Berar, the province of Raghujii Bhosle.\* Raghujii Bhosle now used all his influence with the king to prevent the nomination of Bajirao's son Balaji as first minister. The king, however, was wise enough to see that for all his skill as a hunter and his courage as a soldier, Raghujii Bhosle was unfit to be Peshwa.

There was yet another candidate in the field, namely Babuji Joshi, the brother-in-law of Bajirao and the husband of Balaji's aunt Bhubai. He was nothing more than a successful business man and money-lender. But, like Crassus, he fondly fancied his talents equal to any task. Raghujii Bhosle gave him his support, intending to use him as a mask for his own ambitions.

The chief objections to Balaji's elevation were the vast debt left by his father and his own youth. Bajirao's liabilities amounted to fourteen and a half lakhs. These he had borrowed from some thirty creditors at rates varying from 12 to 30 per cent. The largest creditors were Raghunath Patwardhan, whose debt was three lakhs, and Brahmendraswami whose debt amounted to one lakh and five thousand. Both of these were content to wait for their money. But Babuji Joshi, to whom Bajirao had owed but thirty-six thousand rupees, dunned Balaji mercilessly. To Balaji's rescue went Mahadji Prandare, who paid Joshi in full. Balaji's youth was a no less serious difficulty. The king and the men round him were all in the evening of life. Balaji, who was born on December 12, 1721, was only in his nineteenth year. But in the east men mature early. He had been married to his wife Gopikabai when only eight years old and had been living with her for over a year. He had already distinguished himself in the war against the Sidis and had been brought up under the care of the wise and valiant Chimanaji Appa. If he lacked the con-

structive genius of Balaji Vishvanath and the more splendid talents of his father Bajirao, he was yet an able, resourceful and industrious man. Above all, Shahu loved him like his own son. At the instance of the *Pratmudi*, who disliked Raghujii Bhosle even more than his Chitpavan rival, King Shahu on June 25, 1740, appointed Balaji in his father's place. As he did so, he gave him the following letter of instructions.—

'Your father Bajirao and your grandfather Balaji served me most faithfully and in my service did mighty deeds. I sent Bajirao to humble the Persian and restore the Moghul empire. But he died almost immediately afterwards. His ambition was to guard the Moghul empire and at the same time to conquer all Hindustan. You are his son, realize your father's ambition. Lead your horsemen beyond the walls of Attock.'

The ceremony of investiture was an imposing one. On its completion Shahu bade Balaji go to Poona. Raghujii Bhosle he sent on an expedition to the south.

The motive of the expedition was an appeal to Shahu for help from Pratapsing, raja of Tanjore. After the fall of Jinji the Moghuls had rapidly made themselves masters of south-eastern India. Zulfikar Khan's deputy, Daud Khan, had again made one Sadat Ullah Khan, nawab, or governor, of the Carnatic, and it was his duty to impose everywhere the Moghul ascendancy. This task Sadat Ullah Khan ably performed and at the time of Raghujii Bhosle's expedition the whole south-east of the peninsula was under Musulman suzerainty.

Tanjore, however, had survived by making due submission and was at this time larger than ever before. Shivaji's half-brother Vyankoji had died in 1687 leaving three sons, Shahaji, Sarfoji and Tukoji. They succeeded each other and between them occupied the throne from 1687 to 1735. The youngest, Tukoji, left two legitimate sons, Baba Sahib and Sahooji, and a natural son, Pratapsing. Baba Sahib succeeded but died very shortly afterwards, leaving no issue. After a troubled reign of a few months Sahooji was deposed by his half-brother Pratapsing. The latter, however, had recently been greatly harassed by one Chanda Sahib, a name famous in the early history of the struggles between the English and the French. Pratapsing now earnestly besought his kinsman Shahu to send an army to his relief. Shahu, who had always regarded the house of Tanjore with the kindest feelings, consented to do so, and it was in command of the army of relief that Shahu placed Raghujii Bhosle.

Sadat Ullah Khan was one of the best rulers of his time. He died in 1732. On his death his nephew Dost Ali succeeded him. On hearing of Raghujii Bhosle's intended invasion, Dost Ali at once took steps to save the Carnatic. He chose a strong position on the Damalcherry pass to the north of the river Pone. He had with him only ten thousand troops, but he trusted to the difficulty of the country and sent pressing orders to his son Safdar Ali and Chanda Sahib, who was his son-in-law, to hasten to his help. Safdar Ali, however, was engaged in a distant expedition; while Chanda Sahib was loath to leave Trichinopoly, which he had recently acquired from the widow of its hereditary governor by an act of gross treachery. Winning her

affection, he swore on the Koran to marry her, if she admitted him and his troops into her fortress. She did so and was at once flung into a dungeon. Her appeal to Chanda Sahib's oath was met by the explanation that he had not really sworn on the Koran, but only on a brick wrapped up in cloth of gold. Such an oath was in Chanda Sahib's opinion not binding on him. Dost Ali was thus forced to meet the Maratha army with only the troops by him. Raghujī Bhosle had fifty thousand men, but even so Dost Ali might have repulsed him, had not the Hindu chief, who was guarding the key to the position, deserted to the enemy. Early on May 19, 1740,<sup>1</sup> the Marathas pressed through a gorge to the south of Dost Ali's camp and attacked him in front, flank and rear. In a few hours the Musulman army was totally destroyed and Dost Ali lay dead in the field. Hearing of the disaster, Chanda Sahib fortified himself in Trichinopoly. Safdar Ali retired to Arcot. Both entrusted their families and their valuables to Dumas, the French governor of Pondicherry. Raghujī Bhosle, after his victory, plundered a vast stretch of country and moved against Arcot. Safdar Ali fled to Vellore, where in August 1740 he made a treaty with the Marathas. They were on the one hand to recognize him as nawab of the Carnatic and help him to drive Chanda Sahib from Trichinopoly. On the other hand he was to pay Raghujī Bhosle ten million rupees and to reinstate all the Hindu princes and landowners whom he and his father had dispossessed since 1736.

Raghujī Bhosle then marched on Trichinopoly. Chanda Sahib, who was a man of parts and energy, had spent the interval by strengthening its fortifications and in storing up large quantities of grain. So ready was he for the Maratha onset that Raghujī Bhosle gave up the idea of storming Trichinopoly, and adopted with success a trick that should not have deceived a man of Chanda Sahib's capacity. He gave out that the campaign had been a great pecuniary loss, and that, weary of the Carnatic, he would return to the western Deccan. He gave colour to this statement by retreating to Shiv jaya, some eighty miles south of Trichinopoly. Chanda Sahib, thinking that the Marathas had left for good, sold his stores of grain and sent his brother Barra Sahib with ten thousand of his men to invade Madura. Directly Raghujī Bhosle heard that Chanda Sahib had fallen into his trap, he hastened by forced marches to Trichinopoly and had begun to besiege it before Chanda Sahib had had time to replenish his empty granaries. Chanda Sahib defended himself as best he could and ordered Barra Sahib to return. Raghujī Bhosle detached twenty thousand cavalry to intercept him. Barra Sahib, surrounded by the Maratha horse, made a fine defence until a cannon-ball knocked him off his elephant. Thereupon his army dispersed. His body was found on the battle-field and brought to Raghujī's tent. The Maratha leader had it clad in rich clothes and sent it to Trichinopoly, that Chanda Sahib might learn from it, as Hannibal had learnt from the head of Hasdrubal, the death of his brother and the downfall of his hopes. In spite of this disaster,

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Malleon, *History of the French in India*. This chapter is largely based on that admirable work.

Chanda Sahib defended himself bravely from December 15, 1740, to March 21, 1741 when, his ammunition and stores exhausted, he had no alternative but to surrender. Raghuji Bhosle sent him a prisoner to Satara fort and appointed Murarirao Ghoipade, a great nephew of the famous Santaji Ghorpade, to hold Trichinopoly with a garrison of fourteen thousand men.

Raghuji Bhosle next advanced against Pondicherry and demanded the instant surrender of Chanda Sahib's family and jewels, an indemnity of six million rupees and a regular annual tribute. It will be remembered that in 1672 the French admiral, de la Haye, had established himself in Saint Thomé, at one time a Portuguese settlement on the Coromandel coast. The king of Golconda, urged thereto by the Dutch and aided by a Dutch contingent, set out to retake it. The departure of the Golconda army had enabled Shivaji to extort two million pagodas from the king of Golconda<sup>1</sup>. But the latter revenged himself on the French. In 1674 he and the Dutch took Saint Thomé, but so gallant had been the defence of François Martin, the French governor, that he and his garrison were allowed to march out with the honours of war. Some of the French soldiers were shipped back to France. François Martin with the remainder marched to a spot at the mouth of the Jinji river, which some years before he had, as a refuge in evil times, bought from Sher Khan Lodi, the Bijapur governor. The spot was quite open and destitute alike of comforts and necessities. But Martin was a man not easily discouraged. He soon built houses and laid out gardens for himself and his followers. Round them grew a native town which the Indians called Phulcherry, or the Town of Flowers. This name the French corrupted into Pondichéry and the English into Pondicherry. In May, 1677, Sher Khan Lodi was routed and captured<sup>2</sup> by Shivaji, who thereafter appeared before the walls of Pondicherry. Martin's courtesy, backed by a handsome present and a promise never to make war on the Marathas, appeased the great king and he left the French alone. In 1693 the Dutch took Pondicherry, but at the treaty of Ryswick (September 21, 1697) the French recovered it and Martin, warned by previous experience, spent large sums in strengthening it and made it one of the most thriving towns in that part of India. Dumas was now the French governor of Pondicherry. He had never been deceived by the Marathas' feigned retreat and had warned Chanda Sahib against denuding Trichinopoly. At the same time, both during their retirement and while they were besieging Chanda Sahib, he strained every nerve to prepare Pondicherry against their coming. He repaired its fortifications, collected vast quantities of stores, formed a body of twelve hundred French infantry and drilled five thousand Musulmans, not in the somewhat careless way that the Portuguese had done, but with the rigorous discipline which the renowned generals of Louis XIV had introduced into his standing armies. In doing so he made the greatest military discovery of the eighteenth century. He invented the Indian sepoy who, tried on a

<sup>1</sup> See p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 99.



thousand battlefields against every enemy; has shown himself, if properly led, the equal of all but first class European troops.

As Raghujī Bhosle marched against the French fortress, he sent in advance a haughty letter to the governor

'My sovereign,' wrote Raghujī Bhosle, 'gave you leave to establish yourselves at Pondicherry on condition of paying him an annual tribute. Believing that the French deserved his friendship and kept their word, he made over to you a considerable territory, but you never kept the condition. The Maratha army has now come to enforce it. It has beaten the proud Musulmans and compelled them to pay tribute. I have orders to take Trichinopoly and Jinji and to collect our arrears from the Europeans in the seacoast towns. You were wrong in not paying tribute. We treated you with favour, yet you took sides against us. Chanda Sahib has left in your care the treasure chests of Trichinopoly, his jewels, his horses, his elephants, his wife and his son. You know how we have treated the town of Bassein. My army is very numerous and it wants money for its expenses. If you do not act as I demand, I shall know how to draw from you money to pay my whole army. I rely upon your at once sending me upon receipt of this letter the wife and son of Chanda Sahib, together with his elephants, horses, jewels and treasure.'

Dumas summoned his council and read them Raghujī Bhosle's letter. It was better in his eyes, he said, to endure a siege than to dishonour themselves by handing over the refugees to the Marathas. The chivalrous Frenchmen unanimously approved their chief's opinion. Confident of their support, Dumas replied to the Marathas courteously but firmly.<sup>1</sup> 'You tell me,' he wrote, 'that for fifty years we have owed tribute to your king. Never has the French nation paid tribute to any one. Indeed were I to do so, I should forfeit my head to my master, the king of France. When we were given, not by your king, but by the princes of this country, a piece of land on which to build a fortress and a town, they required but one condition, namely, that we should not molest the temples and the religion of the country people. This condition we have faithfully observed.'

'You have asked me to make over to your horsemen the wife and son of Chanda Sahib and the riches she brought here. You are a nobleman, at once generous and brave, what would you think of me if I were guilty of so base an act? The wife of Chanda Sahib is in Pondicherry under the protection of the king of France, my master; and every Frenchman in India would sooner die than hand her over.

'Finally you threaten, if I refuse compliance, to lead against me your armies in person. I am making ready to receive you well and win your esteem, by showing you with what valour the bravest nation in the world can defend themselves against those who attack them unjustly. Above all I put my trust in Almighty God, before whom the strongest armies are as the straw which the wind blows away. My

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoire dans les archives de la compagnie des Indes* quoted in original by Colonel Malletson.

hope is that He will favour the justice of our cause I have indeed heard what happened at Bassein, but Bassein was not defended by Frenchmen

The tone of this letter so surprised Raghujī Bhosle that he sent to Pondicherry an envoy, nominally to repeat the warnings that his letter had conveyed, but really to ascertain what it was upon which Dumas relied for a successful defence against such overwhelming odds. Dumas received the envoy with that exquisite politeness which is the national inheritance of the French people, showed him his piles of stores, his ramparts bristling with guns, his French soldiers and his drilled sepoys. He then told the envoy that so long as one Frenchman still lived, the French flag would fly over Pondicherry. 'If your master,' added Dumas, 'hopes to find in our town mines of gold or silver, tell him we have none. But it is rich in iron and that iron we are ready to use against all comers.' To soften the asperity of the reply, he gave the envoy ten bottles of French liqueurs by way of a present to Raghujī Bhosle. Raghujī Bhosle passed them on to his wife. Although Hindus of all classes are forbidden to touch spirits, Marathas do not obey the prohibition with the same strictness as Brahmans, and the insinuating Frenchman had disguised the alcoholic nature of the liqueurs under the insidious name of 'Nantes cordials.' Raghujī's wife tried the liqueurs, then tried and tried again. Nor will it surprise any one acquainted with their taste, that the more she drank, the more she liked them and saw with increasing dismay their rapidly approaching end. She implored, nay, insisted that her husband should obtain a further supply by making friends with the French of Pondicherry. Raghujī Bhosle had been greatly struck by the envoy's report of the dauntless bearing of Dumas and his soldiers. He began to open negotiations and hinted after much circumlocution that the further present of 'Nantes cordials' would make for peace. Dumas sent him thirty more bottles. This time Raghujī Bhosle tried the liqueurs himself and saw how just had been his wife's appreciation. He at once withdrew his demands and with his army returned to Satara, deeply impressed by the valour of France's sons and won to her cause by the golden produce of her vineyards.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### THE MARATHAS INVADE BENGAL AHMAD SHAH INVADES INDIA

A D 1740 TO 1748

THE great province of Bengal had owing to its remoteness been hitherto saved from the Maratha armies that had overwhelmed central India and Gujarat, and had crossed the Jamna and threatened Delhi. From every other point of view except distance, Bengal invited the invader. The vast plains covered with ricefields, traversed by the mightiest rivers of Asia, watered by two monsoons and inhabited by

a teeming, unwarlike population had often been the prize of war. From Bengal Sher Shah had driven Humayun out of India. The capture of Bengal had stabilized the throne of Akbar. Its almost inexhaustible wealth had furnished Aurangzib with the means of carrying on the endless warfare of the Deccan. It had now become, like the Deccan, the dominion of an independent prince. During the reign of Aurangzib one Murshid Kuli Khan became at first civil and afterwards military governor of Bengal. He was given the title of Jaffir Khan, but his name of Murshid has survived in the town of Murshidabad, which he founded. He was succeeded by his son-in-law Shuja-ud-daula. He was by origin Turk and he bestowed his friendship on one Mirza Mahomed, who had married his kinswoman. Mirza Mahomed had two sons, Haji Ahmad and Ali Vardi Khan, the Anaverdy Khan of some old-fashioned histories. Both the sons were able and ambitious, but by far the abler was Ali Vardi Khan, who rose after Shuja-ud-daula's accession to the office of first minister and afterwards to the governorship of Patna. On Shuja-ud-daula's death his son Sarafraz Khan succeeded; but in 1740 Ali Vardi Khan, with the aid of his brother Haji Ahmad, contrived to defeat and kill him and to usurp the viceroalties of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.<sup>1</sup> Ali Vardi Khan's worth as a commander was now to be put to a stricter test. Shuja-ud-daula's son-in-law Murshid Kuli Khan had at first acquiesced and afterwards rebelled against Ali Vardi Khan's usurpation. He was forced to flee the country; but his diwan Mir Habib invited into Bengal Bhaskarpant Kolhatkar, the minister of Raghunath Bhosle. Bhaskarpant accepted the invitation and invaded Bihar. He surprised Ali Vardi Khan at Burdwan.<sup>2</sup> But the usurper abandoned his baggage and, refusing to surrender, stubbornly fought his way to a strong position on the banks of the Ganges. Bhaskarpant would then have retired, but Mir Habib implored him to remain and live on the country. He convinced Bhaskarpant of the feasibility of his scheme, by borrowing from him four thousand Maratha horse and with them plundering the factory of one Jagat Shet Alamchand, a wealthy banker, of no less than Rs. 3,00,000.<sup>3</sup> Acting on Mir Habib's advice, Bhaskarpant took Hoogly, Midnapur, Rajmahal and all the Bengal districts west of the Ganges except Murshidabad. Ali Vardi Khan, however, rose to the height of the danger. He sent messengers both to the emperor and to the Peshwa asking for help. At the same time he made a daring attack on Bhaskarpant's camp at Cutwa, not far from Plassey. Before the rains had ceased, Ali Vardi Khan crossed the Hoogly and the Aj. In crossing the Aj his bridge of boats broke and he lost six hundred men, but, undaunted by this loss, he attacked the Marathas and drove them from their camp. Bhaskarpant fled but, doubling back, tried to make a stand at Midnapur. Here Ali Vardi Khan came up with him, defeated him and chased him across the frontier of Bengal. Ali Vardi Khan now informed the

<sup>1</sup> *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin*.

<sup>2</sup> Scott, *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 113 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> Scott, *Deccan*. Grant Duff says that the plunder was 2½ millions sterling. He does not quote his authority.

emperor that he no longer needed help and invited Safdar Jang of Oudh, who had come to his aid with a body of imperial troops, to return to his own province. Ali Vardi Khan, however, was not so safe as he fancied, for Raghujī Bhosle hastened from Berar to join Bhaskarpant. Hearing this, Balaji, who had received Ali Vardi Khan's message and wished both to appear as an imperial general and to gratify his enmity against Raghujī Bhosle, marched with all haste to the help of Ali Vardi Khan. The latter, taught by experience, welcomed him gladly. But Balaji, leaving his ally far behind, attacked and routed unaided Raghujī Bhosle's army. The latter fled to Nagpur, but Balaji remained in Bengal, plundering the country with as much zeal as if it had been an enemy's province. As a reward for his victory over Raghujī Bhosle, the emperor formally appointed him governor of Malwa. To save the imperial feelings, the deed was made out in the name of Shah Mahomed's son, Prince Ahmad. Balaji was appointed as his deputy governor.

It was, however, idle to expect that the Maratha chiefs, whatever their private quarrels might be, would long fight each other to the profit of their Musulman enemies. In 1744 Raghujī Bhosle and Balaji made a secret compact that they should not interfere with each other in their future expeditions. Bengal was to be the preserve of Raghujī Bhosle. The country north of the Narbada was to be plundered by Balaji alone. Thereafter Balaji gave no further help to Ali Vardi Khan. For a time, the usurper resisted Raghujī Bhosle single-handed. In 1745 Bhaskarpant, at the head of twenty thousand Maratha horse, demanded a sum equal to that paid by Ali Vardi Khan to Balaji for his assistance. Ali Vardi Khan, unable to meet Bhaskarpant in the field, begged him to come to his tents and there discuss the amount of the indemnity and the manner of payment. Bhaskarpant, not suspecting treachery, accepted the invitation and moved his army close to Ali Vardi Khan's camp and waited on Ali Vardi Khan. The latter received the trusting Brahman in a tent, of which the inside was surrounded by screens. Behind the screens were hidden a band of assassins. At the cry of 'Cut down the infidel', the concerted signal, they rushed from behind the screens and murdered Bhaskarpant and no less than nineteen out of twenty officers with him. One only, Raghujī Gaikvad, escaped. At once Ali Vardi Khan ordered a general attack on the Maratha army. Taken by surprise, it had great difficulty in effecting its retreat under the leadership of Raghujī Gaikvad.

The treachery of Ali Vardi Khan might have had greater results, but for the insurrection of one Mustapha Khan, to whom Ali Vardi Khan had first promised and then refused the government of Bilaspur. Mustapha Khan implored Raghujī Bhosle again to invade Bengal. Ali Vardi Khan attacked Mustapha Khan vigorously and deceived Raghujī Bhosle by pretended negotiations. When Mustapha Khan had fallen in the field, Ali Vardi Khan sent Raghujī Bhosle the following ridiculous letter:

'Those who seek peace from an enemy are guided either by a sense of their own loss or inferiority or hopes of advantage;

but praised be God, the heroes of the faith feel no dread of encountering infidels. Peace, therefore, depends upon this—when the lions of Islam shall so engage the monsters of idolatry, that they shall swim in each other's blood and struggle until one party shall be overpowered and beg for quarter.

Raghuji Bhosle saw that he had been fooled. Nevertheless he did not let the letter remain unanswered. He wrote that while he had advanced a thousand miles to meet Ali Vardi Khan, that lion of Islam had not moved a hundred to meet him. Ali Vardi Khan was determined to have the last word and wrote, begging Raghuji Bhosle to refresh his troops during the monsoon, as during the cold weather he, Ali Vardi Khan, meant to wait on him until he had escorted him back to his own frontier. Raghuji wisely made no further reply, and by means of his light horse, levied the revenues of Burdwan and Orissa. When the rains abated Ali Vardi Khan, true to his promise, attacked and defeated the Maratha general near Cutwa (1745). This checked the Marathas for a time, but in 1750 Ali Vardi Khan found it necessary to cede to Raghuji Bhosle the province of Orissa by way of settlement for the *chauth* of Bengal and Bihar.<sup>1</sup> In this way the Marathas obtained in Bengal the firm footing still recalled by the ditch that once protected Calcutta and by the name 'Ditcher' which is still given to Calcutta steamers.

At this point we must turn again to northern India, into which a new invader had descended by the same passes that had admitted Nadir Shah. The latter survived the sack of Delhi for seven years. But the cruelties committed by him there seem to have changed his character from that of a just, if stern, ruler into that of a cruel and loathsome tyrant. His last two years were so inhuman that a body of Persian nobles condemned to die next day, took courage from their despair and in the night assassinated him (June 1747). On Nadir Shah's death the Afghan tribes recovered their independence. The hereditary chief of the Abdali Afghans was one Ahmad Khan. Although only twenty-three years of age, his valour and capacity had won the rare praises of Nadir Shah.

On the Persian king's death Ahmad Khan extended his influence over the neighbouring tribes and before the end of 1747 was formally crowned king of Kandahar. His coronation was hardly completed when he marched through the Afghan passes into India. His first goal was Peshawar, which stood a few weeks' siege. His second goal was Lahoré, which surrendered after little or no resistance. Elated by this easy success, Ahmad Khan, like Nadir Shah, aspired to conquer Delhi. The emperor sent his only son, Prince Ahmad, Kamar-ud-din Khan, Safdar Jang, now viceroy of Oudh, the raja of Jaipur and others of his generals to stem the fresh tide of invasion. They reached the Sutley only to learn that Ahmad Shah, as it is now right to call him, had outmarched them and had seized Sirhind with the whole of the prince's baggage. Both armies entrenched themselves and for

<sup>1</sup> This tribute was called by Raghuji Bhosle *mund katai*, or head-cutting, in memory of Bhaskarpant's assassination.

some days their light horse engaged in constant skirmishes. At length a rocket magazine exploded in Ahmad Shah's camp and caused such a panic that the Afghan chief gave up his projected conquest of Delhi and, declaring himself satisfied with the plunder of Sirhind, began to retreat the way he had come (March 1748).<sup>1</sup> Prince Ahmad, while about to pursue Ahmad Shah, was recalled to Delhi by the illness of his father. Thereupon Ahmad Shah halted on the Indus and forced the viceroy of the Punjab to promise him a permanent share of the Punjab revenues. In April 1748 Mahomed Shah died and was succeeded by his son, who like his Afghan neighbour assumed the title of Ahmad Shah. The new emperor, alarmed at the vicinity of the Afghan king, invited Nizam-ul-Mulk to be vizier of Delhi. The Nizam, however, was too old and too ill to accept the post, and on June 19, 1748, he died. His death was followed by a series of complicated events, which greatly favoured the schemes and ambitions of the French.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### THE RISE OF THE FRENCH NATION

A.D. 1741 TO 1750

In the last seven years the power of the French had grown beyond all expectation. Dumas' defiance of a great and victorious Maratha army had earned him throughout southern India the reputation of a hero. Nizam-ul-Mulk sent him a letter of thanks and a dress of honour. Safdar Ali sent him the jewelled armour of his father Dost Ali, three elephants and numerous other presents. The emperor conferred on him the title of Nawab, together with the command of four thousand five hundred cavalry. In 1741 Dumas returned to France. He was succeeded by one of the greatest men whom even France, that fruitful mother of heroes, has ever produced. His name was Joseph François Dupleix, who had already, as governor of Chandernagore near Calcutta, given proofs of the most signal capacity. That capacity was soon to be tested to the uttermost. Safdar Ali, whose taxation had made him unpopular, was, on September 2, 1742, murdered by his brother-in-law Mortiz Ali. Mortiz Ali, however, was unable to profit by the murder, and Nizam-ul-Mulk appointed Anvar-ud-din Khan, a stranger to the family of Sadat-ulla Khan to be the new nawab of the Carnatic. With this ruler Dupleix established such friendly relations that when in March 1744 war was formally declared between France and England, he successfully applied to Anvar-ud-din Khan for protection against the English. Not daring to fight both the nawab and the French on land, the English naval commander, Barnet, tried to intercept a French fleet under La Bourdonnais, who had sailed to Dupleix's assistance. After an indecisive action Barnet withdrew.

<sup>1</sup> Scott, *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 122. Elphinstone states that Ahmad Shah was defeated in a general attack on the Moghul camp.

and La Bourdonnais sailed into Pondicherry. Dupleix now began a counter-offensive. In August 1746 La Bourdonnais sailed against Madras. The site of this town had been bought by the English Company from the last Hindu prince who had styled himself king of Vijayanagar. Madras had never been properly fortified and its garrison consisted of three hundred men, of whom only two hundred were fit for duty. On September 21 it surrendered to La Bourdonnais. The English appealed to Anvar-ud-din Khan for the protection which he had previously accorded to the French against them. Dupleix, however, overcame Anvar-ud-din's scruples by promising to hand over Madras to him. But when the time came for keeping his promise, Dupleix delayed so long that Anvar-ud-din sent his eldest son, Maphuz Khan, with ten thousand men to enforce it. Dupleix ordered the governor, Deprémesnil, to hold the town at all costs. The garrison amounted to five hundred French troops and five hundred of Dumas' sepoys. To reinforce the garrison Dupleix sent a Swiss officer named Paradis with two hundred and thirty Frenchmen and seven hundred sepoys. Maphuz Khan tried to destroy the reinforcement before it reached Madras and with ten thousand men supported by massed batteries, waited for it on the banks of the Adyar. On the morning of November 4, 1746, Paradis to his dismay saw this great force in front of him. His orders were to join the Madras garrison and he resolved to cut his way through. Calling on his men to follow him, he plunged into the river and clambered up the other side. The French troops fought as became their nation. But Dumas' sepoys, to the astonishment alike of their commander and the enemy, fought with no less courage. In a moment the nawab's guns had changed hands and were pouring volley after volley into Maphuz Khan's troops, who were crowded into St. Thomé, trying to escape. They were all but annihilated. Those who survived did not halt until they had reached the shelter of Arcot. The historian<sup>1</sup> of the French in India has justly claimed that this battle was one of the most decisive in the history of that country. Thenceforward it became manifest that there had arisen a new power, whose valour and tactics supplied abundantly their lack of numbers, and whose onset the largest armies might contemplate with dismay.

Dupleix having dispersed the host of the nawab, determined to drive the English from Fort Saint David, their last refuge on the Coromandel coast. But before he could achieve his purpose a large English squadron arrived to relieve it. It was now the turn of Dupleix to stand a siege. On September 6, 1747, Admiral Boscawen with no less than six thousand men, of whom three thousand seven hundred and twenty were Europeans, sat down before Pondicherry. But the genius of Dupleix soared even higher in adversity than in success. Undaunted by the fall of his best officer, Paradis, he himself took command of the garrison, and although without experience of war, he soon displayed behind the walls of Pondicherry the qualities of a great captain. In vain Boscawen used his energy and skill, in vain the English troops attacked with the proud and stubborn valour of their

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Malleison.

nation. In vain Boscawen appealed to the neighbouring princes to help him destroy the stronghold of their common enemy. Fruitless alike were skill and experience, eloquence and courage. Fired by Dupleix's example, the French fought in a way that even they in their long and splendid history have rarely equalled. Overawed by his genius, the neighbouring princes refused to the victorious English either support or supplies. By October 17 Boscawen had lost a thousand and sixty-five of his best troops and had lost rather than gained ground. The winter rains had begun. Sickness was spreading among his men, and the English admiral had no alternative but to raise the siege and retreat.<sup>1</sup>

It was at this moment, when the reputation of the French had reached the highest point, that the death of Nizam-ul-Mulk gave the fullest scope to the aspiring mind of Dupleix. Nizam-ul-Mulk left six sons, Ghaziuddin, Nasir Jang, Salabat Jang, Nizam Ali, Mahommed Sharif and Mir Moghul. Nasir Jang was at Aurangabad. In 1741 he had rebelled and his angered father did not wish him to succeed to the crown of the Deccan. The Nizam's favourite was Muzaffir Jang, a daughter's son, and before his death the old statesman had obtained from the emperor a decree, appointing Muzaffir Jang as his successor. But when Nizam-ul-Mulk was dead, Nasir Jang defied the imperial mandate. Seizing his father's treasures, he won over the army and the leading nobles and proclaimed himself *subhedar*, or viceroy, of the Deccan. Muzaffir Jang went to Satara to invite King Shahu's assistance. There he met Chanda Sahib, who, ever since the fall of Trichinopoly had been held by the Marathas to a ransom far beyond his means. The prisoner and the exile made common cause and agreed to offer King Shahu great concessions in the south, if he would make Chanda Sahib nawab of the Carnatic and Muzaffir Jang viceroy of the Deccan. Before, however, they made definite proposals to the Satara government, Chanda Sahib asked for time to consult Dupleix. The latter on receiving the captive's letter, wrote back that if the two princes would but trust to him rather than Shahu, he would support them and pay Chanda Sahib's ransom. The two princes readily consented, for neither desired save in the last extremity the help of Raghujah Bhoale. Dupleix at once paid to King Shahu Chanda Sahib's ransom of seven lakhs of rupees, and while Chanda Sahib was returning to his home, Dupleix made every preparation to keep his part of the three-sided compact. In July, 1749, Chanda Sahib and Muzaffir Jang with some thirty-six thousand men and a small French contingent under d'Auteuil met the army of Anvar-ud-din at the Damalcherry pass where Raghujah Bhoale had defeated and killed Dost Ali, the father-in-law of Chanda Sahib. With magnificent bravado d'Auteuil offered to attack Anvar-ud-din with his unaided contingent. The delighted princes accepted his offer and the gallant French, less than a thousand strong, moved to attack an army of twenty thousand men in position. Twice the French commander fell back under the fire of the nawab's guns, manned as they were by European

<sup>1</sup> Malleson and Orme.



adventurers. The second time d'Auteuil fell wounded in the thigh. On his fall his place was taken by a captain worthy of even such a governor as Duplex. The captain's name was Charles Joseph Patissier, Marquis de Bussy Castelnau. He was born in 1718 at Bucy near Soissons. His father died when he was a child, leaving him a marquis' title but little else. But Louis XV proclaimed that in the east a French noble might engage in trade without derogating from his order. De Bussy, as he is usually called, went first to the Isle of France and thence sailed with La Bourdonnais to India. He was now twenty-one years of age. His form was slight but with sinews of steel. He had the superb courage of the French noble and he was in the fulness of youthful vigour. He rallied his wavering lines and for the third time led them to the assault. Under such a leader the French were irresistible. Reserving their fire to the last moment, they shot point-blank into the enemy and dashed over the entrenchments. A moment later the day was theirs. Anvar-ud-din fell to a sepoy's bullet and his army melted away, leaving its guns and baggage as the spoil of the victors.

The French had destroyed the host of the nawab of the Carnatic, but they had still to reckon with Nasir Jang. He refused to recognize Chanda Sahib and furnished Anvar-ud-din's son Mahomed Ali with twenty thousand men. This force, d'Auteuil, with thirteen hundred French, two thousand five hundred sepoys and a thousand Indian cavalry, attacked on the Pawar river and dispersed without the loss of a single man. Inspired by this second victory, Duplex dreamed of conquering not only the Carnatic, but the whole Deccan. His first objective was the conquest of Jinji. This fortress had withstood several assaults led by the great king in person. For eight years it had defied Aurangzib. Since its capture by Zulfikar Khan, its fortifications had been greatly strengthened by Sadat Ulla Khan, nawab of the Carnatic. With two hundred and fifty Frenchmen, two hundred sepoys and four cannon de Bussy set out to take the strongest fortress in southern India. Mahomed Ali covered its approaches with twelve thousand men. De Bussy at once attacked the covering army and drove it headlong into Jinji, where it deemed itself safe. But against such a commander not even the walls and cannon of an impregnable fortress could offer sure protection. The defences consisted of three great citadels. That night three French detachments, one of which was led by de Bussy, moved out to take the three citadels simultaneously. One by one the redoubts fell into their hands. Each success animated them to fresh efforts and, as day broke on the eastern sky, de Bussy was master of the last defences of the fortress. In twenty-four hours he had beaten an army that outnumbered his own by twenty to one, driven it into a stronghold deemed impregnable and at a single assault taken by storm both stronghold and army. As the sun rose, the great captain looked with awe at the stupendous towers, that frowned below him and asked himself by what miracle he had achieved the impossible. As he wondered, there rose above his head to flutter triumphant in the breeze the hily-decked banner of the most brilliant of nations.

Nasir Jang now advanced in person against Jinji. His army numbered twenty-five thousand men, the picked troops of the Deccan. Dupleix sent against him three thousand eight hundred only. But the French were invincible. Nasir Jang was defeated and killed and at Pondicherry Muzaffir Jang proclaimed himself ruler of the Deccan and Dupleix nawab of the Carnatic. Dupleix in turn resigned to his ally, Chanda Sahib, the title of Nawab. Not long after his elevation to his grandfather's throne, Muzaffir Jang was killed in suppressing a mutiny. The French, now the masters of the kingdom, set up in the dead man's place his uncle Salabat Jang. On June 20, 1751, Salabat Jang, escorted by de Bussy and a French contingent, entered Aurangabad in triumph and proclaimed himself Nizam-ul-Mulk and autocrat of the Deccan.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### THE DEATH OF SHAHU AND THE FALL OF THE BHOSLES

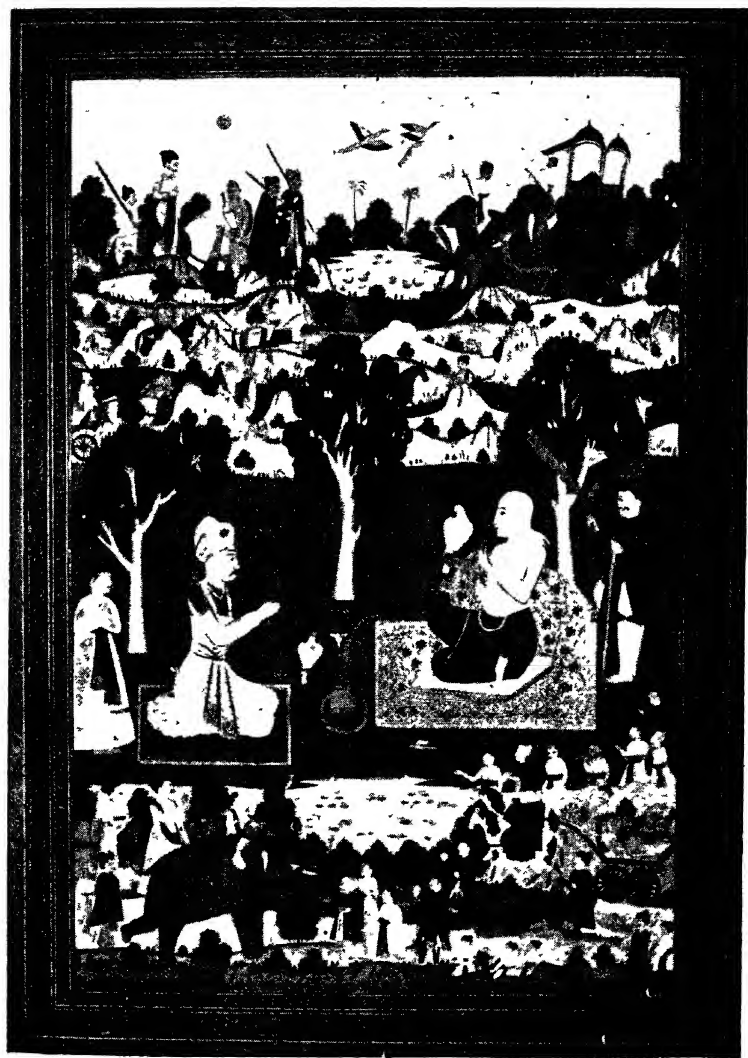
A.D. 1749 TO 1750

WHILE the French were thus laying the foundations upon which the English were afterwards to build up their eastern empire, various causes had prevented any action by Shahu's government. The king's last years were embittered by the ceaseless quarrels of his surviving wives Sakwarbai and Sagunabai. In the early years of his reign the king had kept a considerable establishment. As I have already mentioned, he married in the emperor's camp two wives Ambikabai and Savitrabai and took a mistress called Virubai. On his arrival in the Deccan he married two more wives Sakwarbai and Sagunabai. He also took into his zenana two dancing girls Lakshmibai and Sakhu. He had by Sagunabai a legitimate son Sambhaji, who died in infancy, and a daughter Gajrabai, who married into the Bande family. By his mistress Lakshmibai he had two sons Yesaji and Kusaji, to whom he gave the *subha* of Shirala in the Satara district. By Virubai he had a daughter Rajasbai, whom the king gave in marriage to one Shankarji Mahadik. King Shahu had always treated Virubai rather as a queen than a concubine and she ruled with a rod of iron over the inmates of the royal zenana. But Virubai died in 1740. By this time both Shahu's earlier wives were dead and mutual hatred divided the two surviving queens Sakwarbai and Sagunabai. The fault was undoubtedly the former's. By nature Sagunabai was mild and forgiving. But she revolted against the tyranny which the elder queen sought to impose on her. The court took sides for and against the two infuriated ladies, until at last the king had to call in the Peshwa to arbitrate between them.<sup>1</sup> Shahu's troubles were aggravated by the death of Shripatrao the *Pratinidhi*, his lifelong friend. Although the king thought fit to follow Bajirao's rather than Shripatrao's policy,

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

it was the latter who won and kept his warm affection. Many stories survive of the relations between the king and his minister, whom his royal master familiarly addressed as Rao. One of them will suffice. Once during an eclipse King Shahu went to bathe at Mahuli, the spot where the waters of the Kistna and the Yenna meet. After his bath King Shahu wished to bestow, according to custom, a gift on some pious Brahman. He could see none near him. Shripatrao, who was at his side, said with a smile, 'I am both pious and a Brahman, make me the gift.' Shahu readily complied and bestowed on the ingenious *Pratinidhi* the sixty acres upon which now stand the village and temples of Vasti Mahuli. Shripatrao died on November 25, 1746. On his body his faithful wife Radhabai immolated herself. To honour her as well as his dead friend, Shahu paid a visit to the brave lady and with his own hands decked her with jewels before the terrible ordeal. To Shripatrao's office Shahu appointed his younger brother Jagjivan, but he never filled in Shahu's heart the gap caused by the loss of his dearest friend.

Almost at the same time as death robbed Shahu of his beloved companion, his favourite queen Sagunabai died. In July 1746 she complained of internal pains and at her wish the king took her to the temple of Jejuri, where he spent thousands of rupees in ceremonials and in charity. But neither royal gifts nor prayers could move the purpose of the gods, and to the king's deep grief Sagunabai on August 25, 1748, passed away. The death of Sagunabai no doubt calmed the jealousy of Sakwarbai, but now the question of Shahu's succession came to distract the poor king's few remaining days. Balaji had on his appointment as Peshwa pledged himself to support the claim of Sambhaji of Kolhapur. This policy, which would have united under one crown the two Bhosle kingdoms, would certainly have been best for the Maratha people. But in spite of their apparent reconciliation Shahu hated Sambhaji and never forgave him his alliance with the Nizam, or Udaji Chavan's attempt to assassinate him. Sambhaji, too, had no children. It was, therefore, better to settle in Shahu's lifetime the question once for all, than to pass it on still open to his successor. Sagunabai's first cousin was married to Raghujii Bhosle and she had pressed on Shahu the adoption by herself of Mudhoji Bhosle, Raghujii Bhosle's son. So long as Sagunabai was alive, Sakwarbai stoutly opposed the suggestion, for if acted on, it would have made Sagunabai a more important person than herself. At the same time she actively fomented an intrigue to remove Balaji from the post of first minister. With a creature of her own in office, she could adopt any one she pleased and in his name govern, so long as life lasted, the Maratha empire. Raghujii Bhosle gave her his support, so, too, did the Dabhades and the Gaikvads. Into Shahu's ear she poured a ceaseless torrent of calumny against the Peshwa. She magnified the looseness of his private life, which was not blameless. She talked of his arrogance and ever-growing ambition. 'With such a minister,' she cried, 'what power is left to the king?' The royal troops win victories in every quarter of Hindustan and the Carnatic. The plunder fills the coffers of the Peshwa; the barren glory is the sole profit of his



RAJA SHAHU AND HIS MINISTER BALAJI BAJIRAO



master' The king's poverty and indebtedness were her favourite theme They had been caused by her own folly and extravagance. At the same time it was true that Balaji had by his careful control of the state finances and his own domains not only paid off his father's debts, but amassed a large fortune 'Let the king turn Balaji out of his office,' whispered the insidious queen, 'and confiscate his property, and the royal treasuries will be filled to overflowing' The prospect of getting rid of his debts overcame Shahu's scruples and he sent Govindrao Chitnis to inform Balaji that he was no longer Peshwa The Deccan Party hoped that Balaji would rebel and that then they would be able to unite and overwhelm him But Balaji was far too astute to play into their hands He resigned his office without a murmur, confident that he was indispensable Directly his resignation became known to the confederates, their mutual friendship vanished. No one was either willing to take on his own shoulders the vast burden of the kingdom or to let any one else do so After some months of futile discord, during which all state business stagnated, Balaji managed to secure an interview with the king In the course of it he dilated on the dangers of the situation and at the same time offered to pay out of his own pocket the royal debts This last offer removed all doubts from Shahu's mind On April 11, 1747, he went to Balaji's camp and restored to him the robes and dignities of first minister.

Upon Sagunabai's death, Sakwarbai declared herself ready to adopt Mudhoji Bhosle and his adoption in the end was approved by all the conflicting parties Even the Peshwa saw that it was impossible to win Shahu to the succession of Sambhaji At Govindrao Chitnis' urgent request, the king formally agreed to adopt Raghuji Bhosle's son. At this point a wholly unexpected event brought the transient armistice to an end Directly Govindrao Chitnis had left the royal presence, a messenger from Queen Tarabai asked for and obtained an interview After the ordinary ceremonial courtesies had been exchanged, King Shahu asked the messenger why he came To the king's surprise the messenger replied that he had been sent to ask the following question, 'Why should you adopt an outsider when you have a descendant of Shivaji ready to succeed you?' The astonished king asked the man's meaning, 'I have no son,' he said, 'Sambhaji has no son Tarabai's son Shivaji had a baby boy and he died' The messenger then delivered to the king's wondering ears the following verbatim message, entrusted to him by the old queen. 'When my son Shivaji died,' had said Tarabai, 'his widow Bhavanibai was pregnant Three months after her husband's death she gave birth to a son in Panhala. To save the boy from the jealous hatred of Rajasbai, I induced Bhavanibai to entrust her boy to a trustworthy Rajput couple The wife had just lost her baby, but she still had milk in her breast and she declared herself willing to nurse the royal child in place of her own. The same night I gave the little prince so large a dose of opium, that he passed into a death-like sleep At midnight I and Bhavanibai began to scream at the top of our voices When the guard came to ask what the matter was, we told them that the little boy was dead. Afterwards I got leave from Sambhaji to bury the prince's body. As I went, I handed it over to

the Rajput's wife. I took a piece of cloth and wrapped it round a loaf and two dead fowls, so as to make the bundle look like my grandson's corpse. I then buried the bundle in a hole in the ground on the slopes of Panhala hill. In this way I deceived the guards and made them think that I had buried Shivaji's son<sup>1</sup>.

'In the meantime the Rajput and his wife took the baby to Bavade village, where with my permission they told the story to Bhagwantrao Ramchandra<sup>2</sup>. For five years he provided them with money. A rumour that the prince was still alive reached the ears of Rajasbai, who began a vigorous search for her husband's nephew. To escape detection the Rajput and his wife took the child into the Konkan, where they stayed for two years unmolested. Then the prince's foster-mother died. The Rajput then upon took the boy to Pangaon and obtained the protection of Daryabai Nimbalkar. She hid him in the house of a *gondhali*, or professional ballad-singer, in the neighbouring town of Tuljapur. Two years later the Rajput died, but the boy stayed on at Tuljapur and is still there or somewhere in the neighbourhood.'

The king could hardly believe his ears. He had Tarabai's own statement recorded in writing by Govindrao Chitnis and he demanded of her what witnesses she could call to support her incredible tale. Tarabai bade her nephew send for Bhagwantrao. The king sent him a message, commanding his instant presence at Satara. On his arrival the king cross-examined him closely and found that in all particulars he supported Tarabai. Even so the king was not satisfied. He bade Jagjivan the *Pramidhu* take Bhagwantrao to Mahuli, where the Kistna and Yenna rivers join. There Jagjivan was to make Bhagwantrao take water from the holy Kistna in his hand and swear that Tarabai's tale was true. This Bhagwantrao did. The king, at last convinced that Tarabai's grandson still lived, sent for Govindrao Chitnis and told him that in view of Tarabai's statement, there could no longer be any question of an adoption. The crown must on his own demise pass to the young prince. Tarabai had given him his grandfather's name Rajaram, but to distinguish him from her husband had inverted the two component parts of his name and had always called him Ramraja, the name by which he is known in history. Sakwarbai, who had hoped as the adoptive mother of a young king to enjoy a long spell of power, burst into a passion of rage. Denouncing Ramraja as an impostor, she wrote to Sambhaji of Kolhapur, begging him to take instant steps to save the kingdom, by adopting Mudhoji Bhosle and by claiming on Shahu's death the whole kingdom of Maharashtra for himself and his adopted son. Nor was her action confined to correspondence. She won over the *Pramidhu* who, in spite of Bhagwantrao's oath, doubted his story and she ordered Yamaji Shivdev, formerly in the employ of Shripatrao, and now her own confidential agent, to assassinate the Peshwa. The plot failed through Yamaji Shivdev's jealousy of Govindrao Chitnis, whose aid Sakwarbai

<sup>1</sup> Sardesai, Vol. III, (unpublished). Shivaji died in 1723.

<sup>2</sup> The son of Ramchandra Nilkanth near Barsi in Sholapur district.

was also courting. He hired an assassin called Tulaji and at the last moment told him to kill Govindrao Chitnis and not Balaji. But Govindrao, who had been warned of Yamaji Shivdev's design, was armed and ran Tulaji through the body with his sword before he could strike with his dagger.

On the night of December 15, King Shahu died. Ever since August of that year he had been confined to his room and at times his wits wandered. Nevertheless on the whole he retained his faculties and often expressed himself concerned about Ramraja's succession. He knew that many of the Deccan nobles, especially Jagjivan the *Pratimudhi*, were raising troops for the coming struggle and were willing to support either Sambhaji or Sakwarbai as occasion offered. Unknown to Sakwarbai, he urged the Peshwa secretly to assemble a large force near and round Satara, so as to secure the crown for the young prince. On the morning of December 15 he complained of severe pains and with the sure instinct of a dying man knew that his end had come. He sent for Govindrao Chitnis, told him that after much thought and care he had arrived at the best decision in regard to his successor and bade him help the Peshwa. He next called to his side Balaji and bade him look after the welfare of the kingdom, preserve the Bhosle dynasty and continue the gifts of land that he had made even to the humblest of his followers. He then handed the Peshwa two letters, written as it would seem at different times. In these he conferred on him and his family the post of hereditary first minister. Having done so, he gave Balaji his blessing.<sup>1</sup>

His earthly affairs settled, Shahu dismissed his ministers and with a mind composed, waited calmly for death. He sprinkled holy ashes over his body and took his rosary between his fingers. He murmured softly the names of Rama, Shiva, Har Har several times and met his end as became the nephew of Rajaram and the grandson of Shivaji.<sup>2</sup>

The Peshwa, who had assembled round or near Satara an army of thirty-five thousand men, had for some weeks past halted between several plans. He now acted with the promptitude of Frederick. At dawn a body of cavalry galloped into Satara town, seized Jagjivan the *Pratimudhi* and Yamaji Shivdev and sent them in irons to distant forts. Every street swarmed with the Peshwa's troops and a strong detachment made themselves masters of Satara fort. That evening Balaji called a meeting of the council with the exception of the *Pratimudhi* and produced before them the papers given him by the late king. These documents empowered him, as he justly said, to administer the Maratha kingdom on behalf of Ramraja and his descendants. In view of these papers, Balaji declared and the council agreed that Ramraja was the only possible successor to the late king. Indeed Balaji had already sent a body of troops to escort the new monarch to his capital. Having settled the succession, the next question

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> The king died in the Rangmahal. The ruins of this palace are still to be seen below Satara fort.



discussed was the treatment of Sakwarbai. All agreed that she was a turbulent, unmanageable woman. If she were allowed her liberty, she would certainly denounce Ramraja as an impostor, and adopting a son to her dead husband, would with the aid of Sambhaji of Kolhapur embroil the Maratha nation in civil war. On the other hand, the imprisonment of Shahu's queen would deeply offend Maratha sentiment and would give Damaji Gaikwad and other Maratha leaders an excellent excuse for rebellion. One way out of the difficulty presented itself. It had long been the custom in high-born Hindu families for widows to burn themselves on their husband's bodies. Shivaji had with difficulty restrained his mother, Jijibai, from committing *sati* with Shahaji's body. With Shivaji's body Putalabai had committed herself to the flames. The act, too, was one of great religious sanctity. It was believed to confer on the husband immediate release from future rebirths. The council unanimously resolved that Sakwarbai, as a childless widow, should be pressed to become a *sati* and to burn herself with the dead king. To hide her intrigues, she had publicly given out that she meant to immolate herself, and the council, waiting on her brother, won him over to the view that if she now shrank from the ordeal she would stain the honour of her house. This course Tarabai also, who detested Sakwarbai as an obstacle to her own ambitions, eagerly supported.<sup>1</sup>

Sakwarbai had been deeply depressed at the failure of her schemes, and when her brother urged her to commit *sati* and told her that her refusal would brand with cowardice the whole clan of the Shirkes, she had not the firmness to refuse. On the day that her husband's body was to be committed to the flames, she decked herself as became a *sati* in her choicest robes and jewels and, attended by music, was conveyed on an elephant down the steep path that leads from Satara fort to Satara city. At the spot where the path meets the road to Mahuli, the meeting place of the Yenna and Kistna rivers, a vast multitude in mourning dress awaited her. When they recognized the widowed queen, there went up to heaven a great cry of *Har Har Mahadev* by way of greeting to her and of invocation to the god Shiva. To prevent any chance of rescue there stood, posted at various points along the road, grim ranks of veterans, whose valour had won battles in Gujarat and on the Nerbada and whose torches had fired the suburbs and outskirts of the imperial city. But neither the memory of recent defeat nor the certain prospect of a cruel and lingering death could tame the untameable pride of this daughter of the Shirkes. Her eyes wandered, as if indifferent alike to the past and the future, from the mob garbed in white to the frowning walls of the fortress she had left behind; and from the temples along the road to where the mighty hill of Jaranda lowered in front of her. According to popular belief, Jaranda is a fragment that fell from Drona mountain, as the monkey god Hanuman carried it to Lanka, and it seemed now to look down

<sup>1</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar*. Grant Duff is wrong in placing the entire responsibility of Sakwarbai's *sati* on the Peshwa. Whatever blame attached to him must be equally shared by the council.

with approval on her act and to beckon her along the path which led to her husband's pyre.

When her elephant's stately steps had traversed the two miles that separate the town from the junction of the two rivers, Sakwarbai dismounted. In her hands she took *kusa* grass and sesamum seed and turned towards the east and the north, while the Brahman priests repeated several times the mystic word *Om* <sup>1</sup>. She then bowed to the god Narayan and declared that in order to enjoy with the dead king the felicity of heaven, to sanctify both his ancestors and her own and to expiate his sins, she would ascend his funeral pile. As witnesses to her vow, she called aloud on the eight directions, the Sun, the Moon, on Air, on Ether, on Earth and Water, on her own soul, on Yama the king of Death, and on Day, Night and Twilight. On the pyre was erected a cabin of grass and leaves. Sakwarbai entered it and the corpse of Shahu was placed beside her. Next as if to show that she had left behind her the petty quarrels of this life, she beckoned to her side the Peshwa Balaji. She gave into his hand her earrings of pearls and rubies, and blessing him, bade him rule the country well and make its people happy <sup>1</sup>. Last of all she took a lighted candle in either hand and bade her relatives apply their burning torches to the wood stack. On the spot where Sakwarbai met her death the Peshwa Balaji had a stone *Shrilinga*, or Sign of the god Shiva, built. At one end of it he placed a sculptured image of Sakwarbai. Every evening for a hundred and fifty years the *Shrilinga* has been honoured by the homage of priests and the offerings of the pious, and any evening the visitor to Satara who cares to leave the town and journey to the river may see the rites performed in memory of King Shahu and of his high-spirited queen. Surely for Sakwarbai death had no sting, nor in the blazing pyre was there any victory <sup>2</sup>.

Greatness cannot be claimed for Shahu. Nevertheless we cannot withhold our admiration, when we consider the difference between the Maratha power as he found it and as he left it. When he ascended the throne, his kingdom was a mere strip of land round Satara fort. When he left it, it completely overshadowed the Moghul empire. If he had no great talents, he possessed sound common sense. He had a kindly nature and a placable temper. He had the wisdom to employ great men and the greater wisdom to give them his entire support. He was a keen huntsman and preferred the pleasures of the chase to the toils of office. But the indolence which marred his reputation as a ruler increased the love of his subjects for their kindly prince. Many stories are still told of his lavish generosity; and by his court he used often to be compared with Karna, the open-handed hero of the *Mahabharata*.<sup>3</sup>

Those stories which deal with his favourite dog Khandya will probably prove the most interesting to English readers. This animal

<sup>1</sup> *Bombay Government Gazetteer* for Satara.

<sup>2</sup> I have described the evening ceremonies performed over the *Shrilinga* in my book *The Tale of the Tulsi Plant*.

<sup>3</sup> The courtiers used also behind the king's back to call him Bhola Shankar, or Simple. Shiva Shankar is another name for the god Shiva.

once saved the king's life by flying at a charging tiger. As a reward Shahu gave it a *sanad* conferring on it a seat in his durbar and the rank of a *jaghirdar*, and maintained for it from his own private purse a palankeen and a complete set of palankeen bearers. One day he made a humorous and judicious use of Khandya's palankeen. A Maratha noble named Indroji Kadam held a high post in the Moghul army.<sup>1</sup> He got leave to return to his native village of Supa in the Poona district. Shahu sent him word that although he was in foreign service, he should as a Maratha pay a formal visit at court. Indroji Kadam, on receiving the message, determined to impress with his rank and importance the king and his courtiers. He had his horse shod with silver shoes. He covered his person with jewels and with a splendid retinue went to visit Shahu. As he rode, his drummers beat their drums and his bandsmen played their flutes and fifes, although it was against oriental etiquette for a noble's band to play within the hearing of the king. Shahu met the situation by putting on plain white cotton clothes, unrelieved by a single ornament. But he loaded his dog Khandya with jewels and sent it in his palanquin to escort his visitor into the royal presence. The Maratha chiefs entered whole-heartedly into the jest and took off their ornaments also. Thus when Indroji Kadam appeared, he and Khandya were the only beings present who wore jewelry. Indroji Kadam was wise enough to accept the rebuke and to admit to the king that a man must be judged not merely by his riches but by his merits.

When Khandya died, the king gave it the funeral to which a *jaghirdar* was entitled. He had its body cremated and its *asthi*, or charred bones, committed to earth on the banks of the sacred Kistna. Over the *asthi* he erected a monument and on the top put a red stone image of his dog. In the opinion of the vulgar, this tomb became a holy spot and for many years those who wished to come by the desire of their hearts used to make vows at Khandya's cenotaph. Nor was it unable to protect itself from the usage which the nobles of Rome dealt out to the ancient monuments of the eternal city. Once a Brahman, so the tale runs, wished to build a house at Mahuli Vasti. For this purpose he stole a number of stones from Khandya's monument. But every time that the building neared completion the walls tumbled down until the Brahman, reduced to despair, prayed to heaven for divine guidance. As if in answer to his prayer, Khandya appeared to him in a dream and told him that if he wished to finish the house, he must put back the stolen stones. The Brahman did as he was told and had no further mishap. The monument to Khandya still stands, but the sculptured image on the top is so weather-worn as to be unrecognizable. A small sculpture at the side still preserves the likeness of the hound. There a marvellous beast prances through the ages—awe-inspiring, fear-compelling, tiger-tearing. Surely no dog save that of Odysseus of Ithaca ever had a more enduring memorial.

One day, excited by the chase, King Shahu rode ahead of his companions and found himself close to a small farm where the owner

<sup>1</sup> This and the succeeding stories will be found in the *Shedgavkar Bahar*.

was ploughing his land. The king took the plough from the farmer and ploughed the field himself. Afterwards as a memorial of his visit he gave the farm as a freehold to his host. Another day he passed through Sangam Mahuli and saw a naked anchorite performing penances by the banks of the Kistna. He told the anchorite to ask for alms, but all the saint would ask for was a piece of *kambli*, or old blanket. The king was so delighted at the anchorite's moderation that he bestowed on him a neighbouring village, which happened also to bear the name of Kambli.

The morning of Shahu's death, Balaji had, as he informed his council, sent messengers to escort Ramraja to Satara. During Shahu's lifetime a quantity of gold-mounted saddles and elephant trappings had been stored at Pangaon for the occasion. The Peshwa now sent there Limbaji Anant and Indroji Kadam with a large body of cavalry. On the way, Daryabai Nimbalkar met them with five thousand horse. She asked them for a token and, on seeing Tarabai's ring, led them to the house where the prince lived. This imposing array did homage to Shahu's heir and after the two leaders had distributed five thousand rupees among the *gondhals* of Tuljapur who had concealed the prince, they started back with Ramraja to Satara. On December 26 the cavalcade reached Waduth on the banks of the Kistna river. There Tarabai joined them and publicly welcomed her grandson. The new king could not, however, enter Satara until such day as the astrologers had pronounced auspicious. After duly taking council together, they declared the fourth of January a fortunate day. Until it dawned the prince remained on the banks of the Kistna, receiving and returning visits. There, too, the Peshwa's cousin Sadashivrao joined the royal camp. Early on the appointed day Ramraja set out for Satara. The whole town was gay with maypoles and wreaths and hanging garlands of flowers. The streets were red with the coloured liquid which the citizens sprinkled on the roadways and the pavements. The balconies were filled with young married women, waiting to shower down on the young king handfuls of rice and so win for him the favour of the deities. The town echoed to the sound of horns and the shrill singing of the dancing girls. Balaji met Ramraja at the outskirts of the city, seated him on a royal elephant and mounting behind him waved a horsetail over his head. Shambhusing seated himself on Balaji's left and did likewise. On the way Ramraja distributed to the temples that he passed gifts of money and coco-nuts. When he alighted at the palace, beautiful young matrons waved lamps over his head and then leaves of the sacred *nim* tree to scare away the demons from hindering his coronation. Entering the palace, Ramraja prostrated himself before the family gods of the Bhosles and fervently thanked them for having guarded his young life and raised him from a cabin to a throne. He then bathed, was invested by Balaji with the royal robes and crowned with the pomp of Shivaji.

Ramraja was at this time twenty-seven years of age. But Balaji, making his inexperience an excuse and relying on King Shahu's deed, informed the young king that he would himself conduct the

administration with Tarabai's help. Ramraja offered no objection. He was allowed full freedom of movement in the town of Satara and received a yearly revenue of sixty-five lakhs for his maintenance and establishment. But if the young king was given little share in the administration of his kingdom, he was not stinted in the matter of wives. No less than three brides were bestowed on him. The eldest was Tukabai of the Mohites of Nevas, the second Jankibai of the Mohites of Ving, the third Sagunabai daughter of Barhanji Mohite.

The Peshwa had taken every precaution that human foresight could conceive. But his situation was so full of dangers that only consummate skill could surmount them. Tarabai's intrigues were a constant menace to Balaji's safety. Old age had not chilled her ambition; and she soon realized that the Peshwa meant merely to use her name and to retain in his own hands the full powers of the state. Again, what attitude would Raghuji Bhosle take? Would he denounce Ramraja as an impostor? Would he declare himself independent? Would he join the Nizam in an attack on the Maratha kingdom? The third question which confronted the harassed minister was how to deal with the *Pratimdh*. Strictly speaking, Jagjivan's rank was as high as his own. Jagjivan's brother Shripatrao had been the nearest friend of the late king. His father Parashuram Trimbak had been a hero of the war of independence. To condemn Jagjivan to perpetual imprisonment would cause deep offence to the Maratha nobles and would unite them all against him. Faced by a Deccan Party of such formidable strength, the Peshwa would be helpless. Lastly, how long would Ramraja suffer his minister to manage his kingdom, with wives and flatterers at his ear urging him continually to free himself?

While Balaji pondered over these riddles, Raghuji Bhosle arrived in Satara. But years had softened his turbulent spirit and he soon let Balaji know that he would not, if confirmed in his eastern possessions, disturb the peace of the realm. Balaji willingly granted his demands and issued a *sanad* giving him full powers in Bengal, Berar and Gondwana. He added to these provinces an unexpected gift. He took from the imprisoned *Pratimdh* the *jaghire* in Berar, which the Nizam had bestowed on Shripatrao and conferred it on Raghuji Bhosle. For form's sake the great noble still questioned Ramraja's origin and demanded that Tarabai in his presence should eat with her grandson. She did so, and satisfied with this evidence, Raghuji declared his entire adherence to the new government.

The Peshwa had hardly weathered this storm, when to his dismay a still fiercer one burst. In the fort of Sinhgad lay the ashes of Rajaram. Over them stood the noble temple reared by the devotion of Ramchandra Bavdekar. To that temple, so Tarabai suddenly announced, his sorrowing widow would repair to spend her remaining days in worshipping at the shrine of her beloved lord. The coronation and marriage ceremonies occupied January and February. In March Tarabai set forth on her pilgrimage to Sinhgad. That great stronghold was in the hands of the *Pant Sachiv*, Chumnaji the son of Naro Shankar and grandson of Shankar Narayan Gandekar. With courtesy



BALAJI BAJIRAO (Third Peshwa)



and reverence he received the queen at Sinhgad; but she soon threw off her mask of widowed devotion and successfully incited the *Pant Sachiv* to denounce the Peshwa and to lead his troops to free from his tutelage the young king of the Marathas. The Peshwa's acute mind had from the first seen through Tarabai's designs and he politely invited her to attend in Poona the weddings of his son Vishvasrao and of his cousin Sadashivrao. Tarabai had no intention of leaving Sinhgad; but she accepted nevertheless the invitation and at the last moment pleaded ill-health. In spite of her absence the Peshwa celebrated the marriages with great splendour. Sadashivrao had already been married to an earlier wife Umabai. She had died on March 22. According to Indian custom, he took very shortly after her death a second wife. On April 26 he married Parvatibai the daughter of Bhikaji Naik Kolhatkar of Pen. On May 2 Vishvasrao married Lakshmibai, the daughter of Sadashiv Hari Dikshit Patwardhan. Both these young women lived to witness their husband's deaths in the awful disaster of Panipat.

The wedding festivities over, Balaji resolved to stamp out, before it had time to spread, the sedition of the *Pant Sachiv*. He demanded the instant presence at Poona of the queen and her accomplice and warned them in menacing tones of the consequences of refusal. Terrified at the unexpected discovery of their plans, the two confederates reluctantly complied. In order to detach Tarabai from her fellow-conspirator, the Peshwa bestowed on her regal honours. When she reached Shivapur, she was met by the Peshwa's brother Raghunathrao and a little later by Balaji himself. On meeting her, the Peshwa presented her with a *nazar*, or tribute, of five thousand rupees. He then escorted her with royal state to the mansion of Bapuji Naik in Poona, which he had specially prepared for her reception. The *Pant Sachiv* was treated with all the formalities due to his rank, until his arrival in Poona. There on June 25, 1750 he and his son Chitkopant were arrested and imprisoned. On leaving Satara to celebrate his son's marriage, Balaji had entrusted Ramraja to the care of Raghunaji Bhosle. With the utmost deference the Peshwa now wrote to the king, begging him to come to Poona to dispose of the case against the *Pant Sachiv*. As early as March 1750 the young king had begun to show his jealousy of the minister's power. Writing to a friend on March 26 Balaji had complained that the king squabbled with him over trifles and that he did not know how long the situation would last<sup>1</sup>. Nevertheless Ramraja was not insensible to the flattery contained in the appeal to the royal tribunal.

The Peshwa had already decided what punishment the king should impose on the *Pant Sachiv*. The latter had, it seems, with Shahu's

<sup>1</sup> 'It is now seven months,' wrote Balaji, 'that I have been here. In both places disputes arise between me and the *swami* (the king) about simple matters. The *swami* is weak, I do not know how long we shall be able to work together. So far by great good fortune I have kept the royal favour.' Sardesai (unpublished).



acquiescence, but without any formal *sanad*, occupied the forts of Tung and Tikona and the country round them. The Peshwa's troops, issuing from Poona in two columns, seized simultaneously Tung, Tikona and Sinhgad. The first two forts were occupied without resistance. Sinhgad had to be stormed by the Peshwa's lieutenant Jivaji Ganesh Khasgiwala. Having made himself master of these three fortresses, the minister advised the king to remove Sinhgad from the *Pant Sachiv*'s control and entrust it to Balaji; and in its place to issue to the disgraced noble formal *sanads* for Tung and Tikona. The *Pant Sachiv* bowed to the royal order and obtained his release. Tarabai, her scheme brought to nought, went nursing her anger to Satara fort, resolved at no matter what cost to avenge the defeat which she had just suffered.

Having thus baffled the old queen, the Peshwa turned his attention to the *Pratimudhi*. At Ramraja's coronation Jagjivan the *Pratimudhi* was still in prison, and to punish him for his adhesion to Sakwarbai he was degraded from his office and his brother Bhavanrao raised to it instead. When Raghujii Bhosle escorted Ramraja to Poona, he interceded for the unlucky noble and obtained from the Peshwa a reluctant consent to his release. Balaji, however, was determined not to restore Jagjivan to the post of *Pratimudhi* and was also resolved to render for the future the occupant of that office harmless. He ordered Jagjivan to surrender all his possessions. Jagjivan sullenly acquiesced and sent Yamaji Shivdev to arrange for the rendition of Sangola<sup>1</sup> and Mangalvedhe, the chief strongholds of the *Pratimudhi*'s power. Yamaji Shivdev, however, had no intention of handing over to the Peshwa his former master's lands. He decided to oppose Balaji by force of arms and in the end to yield to Ramraja in person. In this way he hoped to foment such ill-feeling as existed between the king and the minister. The plan was well conceived. Fearing some fresh plot of Tarabai, Balaji did not dare leave Poona. He was, therefore, forced to send the king to reduce the rebel. But with him he sent his own cousin Sadashivrao. The latter was in the flower of his age. His person was strikingly handsome and he had won a high reputation for courage in the Carnatic. At a later date his military mistakes caused the greatest calamity that ever befell the Maratha people. He now served the Peshwa with skill and fidelity. He drove Yamaji Shivdev into Sangola fort and attacked it with such ardour that on *Dasara* day, September 29, 1750, Yamaji Shivdev was forced to ask for terms. Sadashivrao would grant none. All he would promise was that on Yamaji Shivdev's unconditional surrender, he would obtain the release of Jagjivan the *Pratimudhi*, who had again been arrested on Yamaji Shivdev's revolt. The rebel had no alternative but to submit. Sadashivrao sent for Bhavanrao and got the king to confirm publicly Bhavanrao's previous appointment as *Pratimudhi*. He then advised the king to strip the family of Sangola and Mangalvedhe and confer them on Ranoji Mohite, a Maratha officer in whom Balaji had confidence (October 1750).

<sup>1</sup> Sangola is in the Sholapur district,

The new king was thus firmly established on his throne. He had taught the *Pant Sachiv* and the *Pratinidhi* lessons, not likely to be lost on other Maratha officers; and he now formally appointed after the manner of his predecessors his council of state

- (1) The first minister was Balaji, to whom was accorded the title of *Pant Pradhan*
- (2) The *Pratinidhi* was Bhavanrao
- (3) The commander-in-chiefship was taken from Yashwantrao Dabhade, whom drunkenness and vice had made incapable of performing his duties, and given to his son Trimbakrao
- (4) The *Nyayadhish* was Khanderao Kashi
- (5) The *Panditrao* was Dhondbhat Upadhye
- (6) The *Mantri* was Ghanashvam Narayan
- (7) The *Pant Sachiv* was Chinnaji Naravan
- (8) The *Amatya* was Bhagwantrao son of Ramchandra Nilkanth
- (9) The *Sumant* was Vithalrao Anandrao

Besides these Tulaji Angre was appointed *Sarkhel*, or admiral of the fleet, and Govindrao Chitnis and Ramrao Jivaji were the king's private secretaries. Everything indeed pointed to a long and prosperous reign and Balaji saw with apprehension the probable revival of the kingly power. Suddenly and without warning these fair hopes vanished utterly.

Tarabai's design had from the first been to restore the conditions which prevailed when she ruled in the name of her idiot son Shivaji. It was with this object that she had demanded the *sati* of Sakwarbai, so that no son adopted by the younger queen might stand between her and her unslaked ambitions. She had hoped that gratitude and inexperience would always keep Ramraja under her authority and that through him she would crush the first minister and become in fact, if not in name, the autocrat of the kingdom. She saw with bitter anger the failure of her plot against the Peshwa and with utter disgust the rising prestige of the young king. There was only one way in which she could attain to the power for which she thirsted. If she could seize Ramraja's person, rally in his name the Maratha nobles, the *Pratinidhi* and the *Pant Sachiv* against the Peshwa, she might still become once again the mistress of Maharashtra. She laid her plans with unscrupulous skill. Under the pretence of an intended visit to the shrine of Shambhu Mahadev, not far from Satara, she obtained admittance to the fort. As early as September 15 and 20 she had sent letters to Sheikh Mira, who was still commandant, ordering him to collect an abundance of supplies and munitions. On her arrival, she won to her cause, by means of her own commanding presence and large gifts of money, the *karkhams* and the other chief officers of the fort. On November 17 the unsuspecting Ramraja came to Satara town, flushed with his successes at Mangalvedhe and Sangola. With him were Govindrao Bapuji Chitnis and Trimbak Sadashiv Purandare with a large force of cavalry. On November 23 Tarabai asked her grandson to visit her in the fort. When he had entered the palace and exchanged the usual formal courtesies, she took him on one side and pressed him with vehemence to summon the *Pratinidhi* and with his

help and that of the Deccan Party to dismiss from his office Balaji, and with him all his friends and satellites. Ramraja, who realized how insecure his throne really was and how dangerous such an adventure would be, demurred. The old queen grew very angry and let her grandson go without further conversation. Fortunately for the king, he had with him a strong guard. Their leader Bapuji Khanderao so grouped them round the royal palankeen that Tarabai showed her displeasure only by her angry looks. The next day was the feast day of *Champasashthi*.

It is the custom for Deshasth Brahmans and Marathas to observe the *Champasashthi* festival every year in honour of the god Khandoba's victory over the demon Malla, already described by me in an earlier chapter.<sup>1</sup> The festival begins on the bright half of the Hindu month of *Margshirsha*. The images of Khandoba and Malla are cleaned and worshipped, while priests repeat *mantras*, or holy sayings. For six days a fast is observed. On the seventh day the worshippers break their fast by a feast known as the *Champasashthiche parne*. An invitation to this feast is regarded as an invitation from the god Khandoba himself and is even harder to refuse than an invitation to a Christmas dinner in an English family. Early in the morning Tarabai sent her servants with a message to the king, begging him to spend the holiday with his grandmother. The message was couched in most affectionate terms. Nevertheless Bapuji Khanderao, remembering the furious looks of the old queen and the fierce glances of her officers on the previous day, implored his master not to go. Ramraja at first excused himself. Tarabai's servants, well drilled by their mistress, expressed wounded surprise at the king's refusal and his implied distrust. Were the king's suspicions, they asked with feigned mortification, a fitting reward for the care which Tarabai had lavished on him in his childhood? Would she have saved his life as an infant, if she meant to kill him as a man? Would she have raised him to the throne, if she intended to depose him a few months later? They painted with consummate skill a pathetic picture of the old queen surrounded by enemies of state and deserted on that auspicious day by the children of her own house. The king, bewildered by their subtle argument, was at a loss what to do. He put off his decision. Then giving his guards the slip, he resolved to show his confidence in Tarabai by going unattended to Satara fort. An hour or so after the king had ridden alone up the bridle-path that leads to the northern gate, Bapuji Khanderao heard of his master's act. Calling his men, he galloped at full speed after him. He found the gates closed, and the sentries warned him through the loopholes to return or they would fire on him and his men. The brave soldier with his handful of guardsmen could not hope to storm the great fortress. He returned sadly the way he had come.

In the meantime Tarabai had given the king a fond welcome, had feasted him and effectually removed from his heart all traces of suspicion. When it was time for him to go, she bade him an

<sup>1</sup> Chapter xxv,

affectionate good-bye Ramraja mounted his horse, smiling to think how idle had been his subordinate's fears and rode towards the gate. He found it shut and swarming with the queen's soldiers. He ordered them to let him through. They insolently replied that the maharani had commanded them not to let him leave the fort. The famous historian of the French Revolution has asserted that if at Varennes Louis XVI had, as his ancestor Henri IV would have done, drawn his sword and defied the frontier guards to touch the son of Saint Louis, he would have passed safely through to his friends across the border. Had Ramraja drawn his sword and commanded at their peril the soldiers of Tarabai to open the gates and let him through, probably not one among them would have dared lay a finger on the grandson of Rajaram and the lineal descendant of the great king. But just as the heart of the Béarnais did not beat within the breast of Louis, so the spirit of his great-grandfather had no place in the bosom of Ramraja. A childhood spent in squalid surroundings, a youth passed in the idleness of a vagrant's hut, had not trained the king for the present danger. Instead of forcing his way through Tarabai's guards, he turned his horse and rode back to the palace to ask an explanation of Tarabai. But instead of that malignant beldame, he found the house full of soldiers. He was disarmed, arrested and thrown into a dungeon. From his prison he never again emerged alive. So long as she lived, Tarabai kept her grandson a captive. After her death the Peshwa's power was so firmly seated, that none thought of changing what had become a practice consecrated by time. For sixty-eight years Ramraja and his descendants remained prisoners in Satara fort. As time went on, the rigours of their captivity were softened. A tower was built on the northern bastion and on it the heirs of Shivaji used to sit. In their ears their servants would whisper that their empire extended far beyond the distant line of hills to the waters of the Jamna and the walls of Attock. But in reality their dominion ceased at the parapet on which rested their indolent feet. Their deliverance was in the end effected by the coming of a foreign power. It opened the prison gates that Tarabai had closed and created a little principality for the faméant kings of Maharashtra.

The Peshwa has been greatly blamed for having deposed the heir of Shivaji. With what far-sighted prudence he profited by the turn of events will be told in the following pages. But the blame surely rests on the Bhosles themselves. It was the quarrels of Tarabai and Shahu that led to the rise of Balaji Vishvanath. It was the sedition of Sambhaji that created the ascendancy of Bajirao. It was the bickerings of Sagunabai and Sakwarbai, the monstrous ambition and inveterate malice of Tarabai that led to the sovereignty of Balaji and the fall of the house of Shivaji. To use the well-known phrase of Napoleon, the first minister did not take the crown from another's brow. He picked it out of the gutter, where it had fallen. But whosoever's the fault, the consequences were certain. With the imprisonment of Ramraja the epic of the Bhosles ended. The Chitpavan epic had begun.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### THE WOMEN'S WAR AND THE TRIUMPH OF BALAJI PESHWA

A D 1750 TO 1751

IN the late monsoon of 1750 the Peshwa with a large force entered the territories of the Nizam. Ostensibly he was acting as the ally of Nasir Jang. His real aim was to reduce the Nizam's territories to Maratha rule. In September 1750 Raghujī Bhosle received from the Peshwa a robe of honour and sent his son Janoji with the vanguard of the Maratha army to Nasir Jang's assistance. The combined force defeated Muzaffir Jang and took him prisoner. Then the tide turned. On December 5, 1750, Nasir Jang was killed in battle against the French, whose rapid rise the Peshwa had observed with growing resentment. Through a Krikakolam Brahman named Ramdas, in high office at the Nizam's court, he entered into negotiations with Sayad Lashkar Khan, the governor of Aurangabad. The Peshwa was willing to support either a brother or son of Nasir Jang, as Sayad Lashkar Khan might wish. The Sayad chose Ghazi-ud-din, the eldest son of Nizam-ul-Mulk who, in view of his own prospects at the imperial court, had not actively opposed the succession of Nasir Jang. He now, in return for Maratha support, offered to cede to them the *subhas* of Aurangabad and Burhanpur. On receiving Lashkar Khan's reply, the Peshwa prepared to march. On January 29, 1751, he left Poona, and on February 12 he was before Aurangabad, which he invested. Sayad Lashkar Khan paid him seventeen lakhs of rupees, ostensibly to raise the siege, but really to assist his enterprise. The Maratha army then spread over the country and effectively occupied the two districts, Aurangabad and Burhanpur, offered by Ghazi-ud-din. Salabat Jang, who was still with de Bussy in the Carnatic, marched northwards to oppose the Peshwa. On hearing of his advance, the Marathas concentrated on the Kistna and thence moved on Hyderabad. But while Balaji was still at Pangal, seven marches from Hyderabad, he received the most alarming news from Satara. He had recently attached but little importance to the conduct of Tarabai. He was not unwilling that Ramraja should remain for some little time in custody in Satara fort, if only to make him appreciate more highly his release. But he now learnt that Tarabai, in league with Damaji Garkwad, was threatening the whole fabric of the power bequeathed to him by Shahu. He resolved to desert the cause of Ghazi-ud-din and to return to Poona. With his usual address he hid his anxiety from his comrades in the field, but he directed Janoji Nimbalkar to make the best terms he could with the enemy. Salabat Jang, who was ignorant of Balaji's fears, offered to secure the Peshwa's departure seventeen lakhs, two in cash and the rest in bills on bankers in Hyderabad, Aurangabad and Burhanpur. To his surprise and joy, Balaji accepted his offer and evacuated his dominions.

The events that had occurred in the Peshwa's absence on field service resembled the war known in French history as the Fronde. The plot was woven and the rebel armies were organized and equipped by women, although it must be conceded that the characters of the Maratha ladies differed widely from those of Mme de Chevreuse or Mme de Longueville. Umabai, the widow of Khanderao Dabhade had, in spite of her pretended reconciliation with the Peshwa, never forgiven Bajirao or his son Balaji for the defeat of Dabhai or the death of her eldest son, the gallant Trimbakrao. She had openly disregarded the terms on which Shahu had pardoned her family and had continuously withheld the half share of the royal revenues due to the royal treasury. So long as Shahu lived, he would permit no extreme measures, but on the king's death, Balaji, faced with an empty treasury and a foreign war, determined to reduce to obedience the house of Dabhade. Umabai made public complaints against the Peshwa's demands and affected incurable grief at the loss of her protector, the Maratha king. Tarabai saw in Umabai a ready ally. She planned a meeting with her and in the rainy season of 1750 the two women met. Umabai agreed to put the forces of Gujarat at the disposal of Tarabai, provided her final appeals to Balaji to release the Dabhades from their covenant failed. On October 1, 1750, the Maratha ladies met again at the temple of Shambhu Mahadev. The power of the *Pant Sachiv* and the *Pratimudhi* had been broken, and it is possible that at this interview the plot against Ramraja's person was hatched. On October 20, 1750, Umabai instructed her agent, Yado Mahadev Nirgude, to ask the Peshwa to reconsider his claim. Balaji haughtily replied that, so far from reconsidering the covenant of the Dabhades, he meant at once to enforce it. In the agent's presence, he formally invested his *kamavisdars* with powers to collect half the revenues of Gujarat and bade them leave immediately for that province. Directly they had left the audience chamber, Yado Mahadev angrily withdrew, rudely refusing the formal present of clothes usually offered and accepted on such occasions. Umabai, unwilling to rebel, if she could attain her ends by other means, demanded and obtained a personal interview. On November 22, the great Maratha lady met the Chitpavan minister at Alandi. After the preliminary civilities, Umabai pleaded her son's rights and repudiated the terms imposed on them after Dabhai. Extorted by force, so she contended, they were not binding. The Peshwa was more polite to her than to Yado Mahadev, but the gist of his answer was the same. Nothing would alter his resolve to divert into the royal coffers half the income of Gujarat. Umabai bade the Peshwa a dignified farewell. Two days later Tarabai at Satara seized the person of Ramraja.

On the assassination of Pilaji Gaikvad, his son Damaji, who early showed great promise, was confirmed in his father's offices. As Yashwantrao Dabhade yielded more and more to the use of drink and opium, Damaji's power grew. To him was now given the command of an army equipped by Umabai to effect a junction with Tarabai and to break the power of the Peshwa. On her side Tarabai was not inactive. She increased the garrison of Satara by five thousand men,

placed a strong contingent on the summit of Yeoteshwar hill, and garrisoned other strong places in the neighbourhood of the fort. She implored help from the *Pratmidhi* and the *Pant Sachiv*, and sent emissaries to Ramdas, the Brahman in Salabat Jang's service, offering him the office of Peshwa if he would advance with the Nizam's army to her help. Unfortunately for her plot, the *Pratmidhi* and the *Pant Sachiv* thought that they had suffered enough in her cause, while the Peshwa's treaty with the Nizam stopped the advance of troops from the Moghul Deccan. Damaji Gaikvad advanced with great speed at the head of an army of fifteen thousand Maratha and Gujarati troops. His first intention seems to have been to march on Poona. On March 7, he encamped with his army at the village of Ashota. A wild panic seized the inhabitants of the capital. At early dawn on March 8, Radhabai and Kambai, the Peshwa's grandmother and mother, fled from Poona to Sonhgad. On the same day the Gujarat army halted at Kendur, a large market town twenty miles south-west of Sirur. It was once given by Bajirao to his beloved Mastani. Here Yashwantrao Dabhade joined the force and stimulated it by his presence, although he left the command with Damaji Gaikvad. On the 10th, the army halted at Nimbgao, six miles south-east of Khed. On the 11th it encamped at Pargaon, some thirty miles east of Poona. Here the Gujarat general received a letter signed by Mahadji Purandare, who denounced him as a traitor. Thereupon Damaji Gaikvad changed his course and marched straight on Satara. On March 12, Mahadji Purandare's brother Trimbakrao<sup>1</sup> led a strong force out of Poona to intercept him. Purandare came up with Damaji Gaikvad on the Salpa pass. He had by this time been joined by contingents under Balwantrao Mehendale and Bapuji Retharekar, and his troops numbered twenty thousand. He attacked Damaji Gaikvad in irresolute fashion and was repulsed<sup>2</sup>. He retired on Nimb, a small town some eight miles north of Satara. Thither Damaji Gaikvad followed and defeated him. From the scene of the victory, the Gujarat army marched in triumph to Satara. Damaji Gaikvad was received in state by Tarabai and several of the neighbouring forts declared for her. The rebel's triumph, however, was short-lived. Trimbakrao re-formed his army and on March 15 led it once more to the attack. The Gaikvad's troops met Purandare's on the banks of the Yenna. This time the larger numbers of the royal army prevailed. The Gaikvad was forced to retreat with the loss of most of his transport and camp equipage. He retreated towards the Kistna valley<sup>3</sup>. At its mouth stands Wai. This picturesque township

<sup>1</sup> Usually called Nana Sahib Purandare in the Maratha chronicles.

<sup>2</sup> Grant Duff. In this chapter I have followed in the main the *Riyasat*, but as regards the scenes of the fighting, Grant Duff is, I think, to be preferred.

<sup>3</sup> There is some doubt as to the line of the Gaikvad's retreat. I have followed the *Chitnis Bakhar*, which says that he retreated to the Jor Khora, i.e., the Kistna valley. Grant Duff has done the same and so has Sir James Campbell in his *Imperial Gazetteer*. Mr. Sardesai says in his *Riyasat* that Damaji retreated up the Mahadara valley, which lies to the south of Satara. The Indore copy of the *Chitnis Bakhar* mentions the Medha Khora, i.e., the Yenna valley, as the scene of his fight and surrender.

is built on both sides of the Kistna river, which swells during the rainy season into a mighty stream. Even in the hot weather the Kistna never wholly dries up, and year in and year out the score of temples that stand on its banks are mirrored in its clear and brimming pools. The polished Brahmans have a tradition that their town is none other than the ancient Viratnagar, the city famous in the *Mahabharata* as the hiding-place of Yudhishtira, his four brothers and his wife Draupadi. The ancient palace of King Virata, so they will tell the curious visitor, stood on the top of Pandugad, a great fortress close to Wai. On its eastern slopes a small temple marks the spot where the evil prince, Kichaka, lured to his doom by the lovely and virtuous Draupadi, went to meet her at a spot chosen by herself. He found awaiting him, not the princess whom he expected, but her terrible husband, Bhima. It was also from Viratnagar that Yudhishtira and his brothers set forth to the stricken field of Kurukshetra, whereon India's chivalry all but perished for ever. As the traveller advances westward up the valley, it narrows; the river grows smaller and the hills on either side become wilder and the forests on them thicker. At last the gorge ends in a blind alley, blocked by a ridge a thousand feet high, which divides the Konkan from the Deccan plateau. The ridge is covered with dense jungle, even now the haunt of sambur and panther, wild dog and wolf, and in its depths are to be found the true sources of the Kistna river.

By a series of skilful actions the unhappy Gaikwad was driven further and further up-stream, until at last he could retreat no more. The narrow gorge furnished him with no supplies. Beyond it the *Sarsubha*, or governor of the Konkan, Ramaji Mahadev Biwalkar, held the country in the Peshwa's interest. Damaji still communicated across the Mahableshwar plateau with Tarabai's garrison at Yeoteshwar. At last even this narrow door was closed. The Peshwa advanced with lightning speed from the Moghul frontier. In thirteen days he covered four hundred miles. The news of Purandare's victory reached him at Nazamkonda. In April 24, he was at Satara. He at once stormed Yeoteshwar, and killed or took the garrison. He then drove in Tarabai's outposts, recaptured the lost forts and joined Purandare in the Kistna valley. Damaji Gaikwad gave way to despair. His Maratha soldiers deserted and fled as best they could over the wild hills, the Gujarat troops, ignorant of the locality, lost all heart. He sent to the Peshwa a messenger begging for terms of peace. Balaji affected to welcome the messenger and sent as his envoys Trimbakrao, Purandare and Ramchandra Shenvi.<sup>1</sup> They invited Damaji to return with them to the Peshwa's camp, and he did so. The Peshwa bade Damaji pitch his tents close to his own, that they might amicably discuss the terms of peace. When Damaji had obeyed, the Peshwa demanded the definite cession of half Gujarat and an indemnity of twenty-five lakhs. Damaji refused, pleading that he was a mere subordinate, and referred Balaji to Umabai. As nothing would

<sup>1</sup> See chapter xxxix.



move Damaji from this position, the Peshwa changed his tactics. On April 30 he attacked, in spite of the armistice, the Gaikvad's camp, shortly before the dinner hour. The Gujarat troops, completely surprised, offered no resistance.

Damaji was captured in his bath. With him were taken his brother Khanderao, his eldest son Sayaji, his minister Ramchandra Baswant, Yashwantrao and Umabai Dabhade. Damaji's three youngest sons, Govindrao, Manaji and Fatehsing, fortunately for them, were staying with Tarabai in Satara. The prisoners were sent ahead to Poona, while the Peshwa invested Satara fort and vainly pressed the old queen to release Ramraja. That unfortunate prince's condition had grown worse with the failure of Tarabai's plans. Unable to induce him publicly to remove Balaji from his office, she confined him in a damp, cold dungeon. After the defeat of the Gaikvad, she vented her full spite on the wretched prince. She fed him with the coarsest grain, insulted him daily and openly spoke of him as an impostor—a mere *gondhali* whom she had in a foolish moment presented to Shahu as her grandson. Ramraja's spirit, never of the highest, drooped under this treatment. His health and mind suffered and he soon became (what Tarabai wanted him to become) unfit to sit on the throne of his forefathers.

Satara was well provisioned and of great strength. A siege would have lasted for months and could hardly have ended before the monsoon, which in Satara bursts in the first week of June. Balaji therefore turned his face northwards and marched to Poona. During the rainy season of 1751, he tried to induce Damaji Gaikvad to cede on behalf of Yashwantrao Dabhade half the lands of Gujarat. This Damaji, as often as asked, refused to do, and counter-intrigued with Dabhade and Tarabai to compass the Peshwa's destruction. At last Balaji lost patience. On July 19, 1751 he placed Damaji and his diwan, Ramchandra Baswant, in strict confinement. On November 14 he sent them to Lohgad and Khanderao Gaikvad to Sinhgad. Some weeks later Ramchandra Baswant escaped in disguise and made his way to Gujarat. His presence there revived the hopes of the Gaikvad family. He and his cousin Balaji Yamaji met the Gaikvad's relatives, agents and servants at the great fort of Songad. In the cold weather Balaji sent his brother Raghunathrao, a brave and skilful captain, to reduce Gujarat to obedience. Raghunathrao recovered the revenues of Surat, but he could not penetrate north of the Tapi; while the governor of Bassein, Shankarji Keshav Phadke was, on laying siege to Parner, attacked, routed and driven from the province. These mishaps made the Peshwa still more anxious to come to terms. On the other hand confinement was preying on Damaji. He had been put in irons since Ramchandra Baswant's escape. His sons, at first safe with Tarabai, were afterwards barely saved from her venomous temper by Govindrao Chitnis; while Balaji was successfully tempting Khanderao Gaikvad from his allegiance to Damaji. In these circumstances both parties sought a means of reconciliation. They found a mediator in Ramchandra Shenvi. In March, 1752 Damaji, yielding to his instance, abandoned the cause of the Dabhades, his

masters. He consented to cede a half of Gujarat and of all his future conquests, to pay a yearly tribute of Rs. 5,25,000 and as arrears Rs. 15,00,000, to maintain for the Peshwa's service ten thousand horses and to send to the Dabhade family a yearly sum sufficient to maintain them in dignified comfort. On his side the Peshwa promised to aid in the capture of Ahmadabad and the expulsion of the Moghuls from Gujarat. He also conferred on Damaji Gaikvad the title of Sena Khas Khel, to which the maharajas of Baroda still attach great value.

On December 10, 1752, an army commanded by Raghunathrao set out for Gujarat. With him went Vithal Shivdev, the founder of the Vinchurkar family, while Malharao Holkar, Jayappa Sindia, a son of Ranoji, and Powar led contingents in the field. Forming a junction with Damaji Gaikvad, the combined forces, at least fifty thousand strong, invested Ahmadabad. The Moghul commander, Jawan Mard Khan Babi, was absent at Palanpur. He skilfully passed through the Maratha lines and threw himself into Ahmadabad. His defence of the town was loyal and resolute. At one time the Marathas mined the fortifications, but without result. At another they smuggled into the town seven hundred soldiers. These were discovered and slaughtered. At last, in March 1753, Jawan Mard Khan Babi surrendered Ahmadabad. In exchange he and his brothers were confirmed in their possessions in Kathiawar, Balasinor and Radhanpur. Shripatrao Bapuji was appointed by the Peshwa governor of Ahmadabad, but one gate of the city was entrusted to the keeping of the Gaikvad. In July 1756, Momin Khan, nawab of Cambay, with a body of Moghul troops occupied Ahmadabad in the absence of Shripatrao Bapuji at the Poona court. But Sadashiv the son of Ramchandra Shenvi, sent by the Peshwa, was in October 1757, with Damaji Gaikvad's help, able to dislodge him. Thereafter the town remained in the undisturbed keeping of the Marathas.<sup>1</sup>

Thus agreeably to the Peshwa's good fortune ended the Women's War. Umabai<sup>2</sup> and the Dabhades were reduced to impotence and poverty. Even Tarabai was not unaffected. She felt that she could not indefinitely defy the Peshwa. She had quelled a rising of the garrison by seizing and beheading their leader, Anandrao Jadhav. Such were her superhuman strength of will and vigour, that his fellow-conspirators, thinking her an evil spirit and therefore invincible, let themselves be executed without resistance. Having thus established a reign of terror in Satara, she consented to meet the Peshwa in Poona. She did so with the greater confidence in that Raghujji Bhosle's son Janoji, who was in the neighbourhood of Poona with a powerful army, assured Tarabai of his support. Trusting in this assurance, the old queen went in high state to Poona. She was

<sup>1</sup> Elliott, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> Umabai died on November 28, 1753. On her death Balaji took Yashwantrao into the Carnatic. The fatigues of the march proved too severe. He died near Miraj on May 18, 1754, leaving a son, Trimbakrao Dabhade (*Riyasat*).

received by Balaji with the utmost deference and, after a show of reluctance, she made her submission and agreed to dismiss Baburao Jadhav, whom she had left in command behind her, and whom Balaji disliked. In return, Balaji left in her care her unfortunate grandson. He did, indeed, ask for Ramraja's release, but on this point the old beldame was obdurate, and in the end the Peshwa decided, perhaps wisely, to sacrifice the king for the peace of the kingdom. Tarabai did not trust Balaji's bare word and demanded that he should confirm it by an oath in the temple of Jejuri. That temple was not then the stately building, approached by a lofty staircase and adorned with shrines and parapets, that it now is. But it was nevertheless one of the holiest spots in the Deccan. It is sacred to the god Khandoba, of whom the following tale is related. Some Brahmans living near Jejuri were at one time tormented by a demon called Malla or Mallasur. In answer to their prayers, the god Shiva took shape as the warrior Khandoba and slew Malla. On the latter's death both Khandoba and Malla were absorbed into the godhead. It was at this temple that Shivaji had met his father Shahaji. Aurangzib's men-at-arms had tried to plunder it, but had been ignominiously driven out by a swarm of hornets that miraculously issued forth from a hole in the temple wall. The bigoted emperor, convinced against his reason of the power of a Hindu idol, had bestowed on it a diamond worth a lakh and a quarter. In this temple, hallowed by the reverence of millions, Tarabai and Balaji met. On September 14, 1752, they swore that they would abide by their mutual promises, and Tarabai further declared on oath that Ramraja was not her grandson, but a *gondhali* and a common impostor. This statement Balaji affected to believe, since it justified him in taking no further steps to obtain Ramraja's freedom. After the interview the high contracting parties returned to their respective strongholds. Tarabai had indeed secured the perpetual custody of the king, but the real victory lay with the Peshwa. By a happy combination of courage and resource, skill and patience, he had defeated or disarmed all his enemies. The Chitpavan statesman was henceforth the sole ruler of the Maratha empire.

## CHAPTER XXXIX

### THE WAR AGAINST THE NIZAM

A.D. 1751 to 1752

WHILE Balaji was thus meeting with undaunted front the intrigues of Umabai and Tarabai and the army of Damaji Gaikwad, he was at the same time threatened by a domestic quarrel and a foreign war. The Peshwa saw that the feeling of the Maratha leaders opposed his reduction of Satara by force of arms. At the same time he realized more clearly than anyone the impossibility of ruling in harmony with the malignant Tarabai, but his views were not shared by his cousin Sadashivrao. The latter wished for himself the post of Peshwa's *diwan* and the ascendancy enjoyed in public affairs by his father,

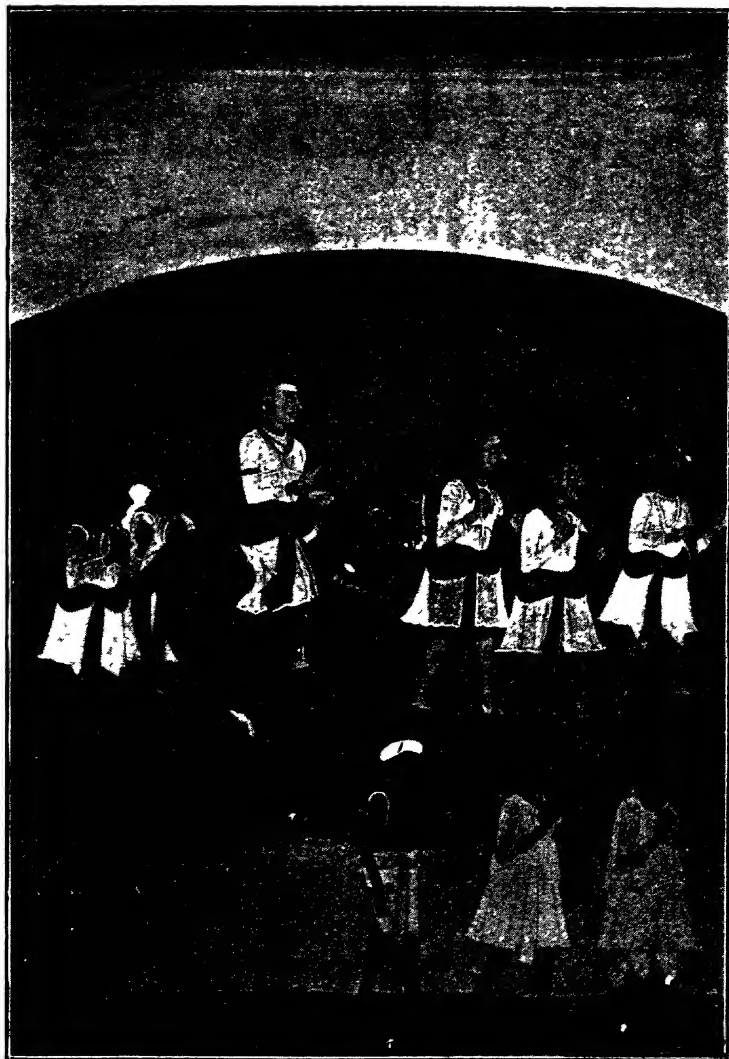
Chimnaji Appa. On the other hand, Balaji was unwilling to confer power on one who had so far shown no proof of signal capacity. He had appointed Mahadji Purandare as his diwan and desired to keep him. His wife, Gopikabai, too, feared that the interests of her sons might suffer if Sadashivrao obtained an undue influence over her husband. Thwarted in his ambition, Sadashivrao pressed on Balaji a further public reconciliation with Tarabai, but Balaji rejected his advice. The anger of the young Chitpavan was fanned by the malice of Ramchandra Malhar Shenvi. Ramchandra had been *kulkarni* of Aravali in Savantvadi but, unable to meet his ruler's demands, had fled to Satara. Under Bajirao he had distinguished himself both in arms and in business and had been appointed diwan by that Peshwa to Ranoji Sindia. While the latter remained poor, Ramchandra Malhar Shenvi amassed a large fortune. On Ranoji's death, Ramchandra wished to be confirmed in his post; but Jayappa Sindia had long been jealous of his power and saw with no favourable eye the splendour of his mode of life. At Poona Ramchandra lived in a seven-storied mansion built by himself, and his fame had spread throughout India, because of his donations to temples and public charities, and especially because of the masonry works built by him on the banks of sacred rivers. The money that increased the glory of the minister had been, so Jayappa rightly guessed, pilfered from his master's revenues. Malharrao Holkar, the ruler of the neighbouring state, feared Ramchandra and also desired, although on different grounds, his removal. After his dismissal by Sindia, Ramchandra was appointed diwan to Sadashivrao. To his new master Ramchandra whispered that Sadashivrao's capacity was as great as his father's and, sneering at his cousinly love and obedience, urged him to demand his rightful place in the administration. On Balaji's refusal to dismiss Purandare, Ramchandra Malhar tempted Sadashivrao to secure at the court of Kolhapur a position equal to Balaji's at the court of Satara. Thus, urged the insinuating diwan, would Tarabai's plots be set at nought. Sambhaji would take the place of Ramraja and once more a Bhosle would rule as king. Mahadji Purandare, too, favoured the scheme, as by Sadashivrao's departure for Kolhapur he himself would remain secure in his office. Behind his cousin's back, Sadashivrao entered into a correspondence with Sambhaji. The king readily agreed to make Sadashivrao his Peshwa and offered him by way of salary a *jaghire* of five thousand rupees a year and the three forts of Pargad, Bhimgad and Wallabhagad<sup>1</sup>. Jijabai, Sambhaji's queen, bitterly jealous of Tarabai, already counted on her rival's downfall, but the clear vision of the Peshwa penetrated the schemes of the conspirators. He so sternly upbraided Mahadji Purandare, that the latter in anger resigned his post, which the Peshwa at once bestowed on Sadashivrao. He attached Ramchandra Shenvi to his interest by appointing him his *karbhari*, but at the same time contrived to extort from him thirty-six lakhs of rupees. About Mahadji Purandare's future conduct the

<sup>1</sup> *Riyasat*. Grant Duff gives the forts as Pargurh, Kallandhee and Chundgurhee.

Peshwa felt grave doubts. But, although deeply hurt at the Peshwa's reprimand and the loss of his post, Purandare never wavered in his loyalty. As we have seen, he denounced as a traitor Damaji Gaikvad and sent his brother Trimbakrao in command of the force that so signally defeated him. On the *Dasara* festival following the collapse of Damaji's rebellion, the Peshwa was publicly reconciled to the Purandares and bestowed on them grants of land not inadequate to their great services. Ramchandra Malhar never again played a prominent part in public affairs. In 1752, he accompanied Balaji on a pilgrimage to Nasik on the Godavari river. The occasion was the *smhast*, the period when at the end of every twelve years the planet Jupiter enters the sign of the zodiac Leo. Thousands of pilgrims flock to the sacred river, for then, so it is believed, the Ganges pays her fairer but slighter sister a visit and joins her waters to those of the Godavari. Subsequently Ramchandra was entrusted with a small command, but achieved nothing noteworthy. At last the Peshwa, sure of Sadashivrao, dismissed from his service the unlucky Shenvi. In July 1754, Ramchandra went on pilgrimage to Pandharpur, but at the end of September he fell ill. On October 1, he was struck down by paralysis. Unconscious for three days, he died on October 4, 1754. He was burnt at Onkareshwar, the great burning-ghat reserved at Poona for the Brahman caste, and on his pyre his wife Dwarkabai burnt herself as a *sati*.

As I have related, the Peshwa had undertaken, in return for the cession of the districts of Aurangabad and Burhanpur, the elevation of Ghazi-ud-din to the throne of Asaf Jah.<sup>1</sup> The invasion of the Deccan by Damaji Gaikvad had forced the Peshwa to retreat. Once Damaji had surrendered, the Peshwa resolved to renew his interrupted campaign. He had received, it is true, from Salabat Jang a cash payment of two lakhs, but the bills on the bankers for fifteen lakhs had not been honoured and Ramdas had put Balaji off with false excuses and, to make matters worse, had recently plundered a Maratha convoy. The Peshwa ordered Holkar and Sirdia to join Ghazi-ud-din and to effect a junction with himself near Aurangabad, now occupied by Salabat Jang and his French allies. The news of this fresh campaign filled the Nizam and his advisers with consternation and dismay. But it was in the hour of danger that the courage of de Bussy rose to its greatest height. 'Care nothing,' he said to his trembling master, 'care nothing for the invading army; you will best

<sup>1</sup> Asaf Jah, the title of the Nizam, means one who is an Asaf in dignity. According to an old Muslim legend, Asaf, the son of Barachia, was the vizier of King Solomon and was renowned for his prudence and wisdom. Two instances are given in the Koran of his superhuman intelligence. On one occasion he contrived to bring underground to Jerusalem the throne of Balkis, the queen of Sheba, by pronouncing the ineffable hundredth name of God, which he alone knew. On another occasion he discovered the wickedness of Jerada, the daughter of the king of Sidon. When Solomon had slain her father, he married Jerada. But in spite of her wedlock to a true believer, she and her maids secretly set up and worshipped the image of the dead king. Her wickedness was established by Asaf and adequately punished by King Solomon.



SADASHIVRAO BHAU



preserve the Deccan by marching on Poona.' With cool audacity the French general unfolded his plan, and such was his influence that he overcame the fears of Salabat Jang. Leaving Aurangabad to its fate, the Moghul prince moved on to Golconda and, after some days spent there in preparation, he marched through Pabal, Khedal and Ahmadnagar to Bedar on the road to Poona. As he marched, he contrived to send messages to Tarabai at Satara and received from the treacherous old queen favourable and encouraging replies. Near Parner, de Bussy learnt of the approach of a Maratha army. Balaji, angered at the boldness of the Nizam's plan, had been sufficiently affected by it to detach forty thousand picked horsemen from the main army and lead them in pursuit. The Moghul forces consisted of large irregular levies, quite unfit to meet Balaji's cavalry. But with them were five hundred French infantry and five thousand highly disciplined sepoys led by French officers. On the news of the enemy's vicinity the Musulmans formed up to await the Maratha attack. De Bussy seized some heights on one of the flanks and put his field-pieces on them, so as to command the ground across which the Peshwa must charge. In support of the guns he drew up his disciplined infantry. Balaji attacked the Moghuls in the usual Maratha fashion, testing the whole line before charging home. But these proved bad tactics in face of the rapid shooting of the French cannon and the continuous fire of their drilled riflemen. The Maratha army, after suffering some loss, disappeared. De Bussy led the Moghuls on Poona, destroying all the villages through which they passed. The Peshwa retaliated by getting his agents to spread among the Moghuls rumours of intended French treachery. De Bussy's answer was a brilliant *coup de main*. On November 22, the Marathas were engaged at Kukadi in devotions inspired by an eclipse of the moon. Balaji, like most members of his family, was strict in his religious beliefs and encouraged his soldiers to pray to the Most High, to secure an early release of the moon from the clutches of the demon Ketu. While so engaged, they were surprised by de Bussy's trained troops. The Maratha army did not suffer heavily, but they abandoned their camp, from which the plundering Moghuls secured a considerable booty. Among their trophies were the golden utensils used by the Peshwa for himself and for his gods. On November 27, 1751, the French general took and sacked Ranjangaon and utterly destroyed Talegaon Damdhare.

De Bussy's plan of campaign had succeeded. So far from invading the Nizam's dominions, Balaji was perplexed how to save Poona. He reinforced his army by summoning to it the Sindia contingent, led by Dattaji and Madhavrao Sindia, two sons of Ranoji Sindia; and on November 27, 1751, he attacked the Moghul army on the banks of the Ghodnadi river with the utmost determination. The Maratha attack was led by Mahadji Purandare, Dattaji and Madhavrao Sindia and Kanherrao Trimbak Ekbote, a native of Purandar. A peculiar interest attaches to the last-named of the four leaders. On this day his gallantry was so splendid that, on the demand of the army, the Peshwa conferred on him the title of Phakde, or the brave. This title, or



rather nickname, was only conferred three times by the Marathas and then only by the unanimous judgment of the troops. It entitled the recipient to wear a silver bangle on his horse's foreleg. The other two gallant men who were similarly honoured, were Manaji Sindia and Captain James Stewart, still known to Maratha writers as Ishtur Phakde. We shall hear of them later. Kanherao Phakde, as he was always known after the battle of Ghodnadi, lived for five years to enjoy his high reputation. In May 1756 he was killed before Savanur, by the side of Sadashivrao, the Peshwa's cousin.

So vigorous was the Maratha charge that Salabat Jang's levies were completely overwhelmed. The day was saved by de Bussy. Changing his front, he brought his guns to bear on the flank of the charging cavalry with such effect that he enabled the Moghuls to rally; and, although the Maratha losses were far less than those of their enemies, they eventually withdrew from the field, taking with them Salabat Jang's howdah, four elephants and seven hundred horses. The next day de Bussy pressed on to Koregaon on the river Bhima, a little town only sixteen miles from Poona. Balaji now decided to follow his foe's example and save his capital by carrying the war into his enemy's country. He directed Sadashivrao to enter into negotiations with the Nizam's Hindu diwan, Ramdas, to whom Dupleix had given the title of Raja Raghunathdas. The plenipotentiaries met, but the negotiations, no doubt at Balaji's orders, were deliberately drawn out. Before any settlement was arrived at, the Nizam was dismayed to hear that the fort of Trimbak had been escalated by a Maratha officer. While the Nizam vainly protested against the outrage and demanded the return of his property, news reached him that Raghuji Bhosle was overrunning, on his eastern frontier, the whole country between the Penganga and the Godavari. At the same time the Peshwa's agents fomented the discontent of the Moghul soldiery, by charging de Bussy with embezzling their pay, which they had not received for several months. Salabat Jang's confidence in his French general was shaken and he ordered a retreat to Ahmadnagar. Having reached that town in safety, the Nizam's courage returned. He replenished his ammunition and collected siege guns for the recapture of Trimbak. He set out northwards, but he was so harassed on his march that he abandoned his enterprise and once again sought de Bussy's counsel. That sagacious soldier saw that it was useless to continue the march on Trimbak. It was useless also to march on Poona, for the Moghuls had turned their backs on it and were now sixty miles away. He advised his master to ask for an armistice and thus secure his retreat to his own dominions. The Nizam took his advice. On January 7, Balaji at Shingwa granted an armistice in return for a promised cession of land. Salabat Jang sent some cakes, and his diwan, Raja Raghunathdas, sent some *tulsi* leaves as a proof of their good faith; and the lately victorious army retreated across its own frontier. Salabat Jang was still in grave peril. His army was mutinous for want of pay, and during the homeward march Raja Raghunathdas was assassinated by some Afghan soldiers, with whose commander he had quarrelled. On de Bussy's advice the Nizam

replaced the dead diwan by Sayad Lashkar Khan, the former governor of Aurangabad; but it was still impossible to enter that city. Ghazi-ud-din, supported by Holkar and the main Maratha army, had occupied it with 1,50,000 men. To his cause had rallied the Moghul gentry of Aurangabad and Burhanpur, and even Salabat Jang felt qualms about his right to supersede his elder brother. Indeed, he would in all probability have yielded to the persuasion of Sayad Lashkar Khan, who was a secret adherent of Ghazi-ud-din, and surrendered his throne in exchange for a landed estate. The Marathas would have acquired Aurangabad and Burhanpur under their agreement, and Ghazi-ud-din would have become the new autocrat of the Deccan. But this arrangement, which would have been fatal to French influence, was suddenly rendered impossible by the death of the viceroy-designate. At Aurangabad, in the ancient palace of the *subhedars*, lived one of the widows of the great Nizam-ul-Mulk. She had borne her husband one son, Nizam Ali, and it was the darling wish of her heart to see her son succeed to his father's office. Two obstacles stood in his way. One, Salabat Jang, was safe with de Bussy and the army. The other, Ghazi-ud-din, was close at hand. On October 16, 1752 she invited her stepson to dinner and insisted on his partaking of one dish which she said with truth she had prepared herself. The unfortunate claimant, suspecting nothing, ate of it freely, the same night he died of poison. Salabat Jang had now no elder brother to dispute his claim. But the Maratha leaders insisted on his carrying out Ghazi-ud-din's engagements. In this they were supported by the Moghuls of Burhanpur, who, after the help given by them to Ghazi-ud-din, were afraid to remain Salabat Jang's subjects. The viceroy left the decision to de Bussy. The French general preferred a solid peace to a doubtful war and advised the surrender of a considerable tract of land, provided Raghujī Bhoṣle first withdrew from the eastern provinces. Balaji ordered Raghujī Bhoṣle to do so. He complied. Thus, in spite of de Bussy's genius and of French valour, the Peshwa acquired in this war the sacred town and fort of Trimbak and the whole country west of Berar from the Tapti to the Godavari.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XL

### THE RISE OF THE ENGLISH AND THE FALL OF ANGRE

A D. 1751 to 1757

AMONG my readers there must be many who, reading of the inability of the English to take Angre's fortresses and of their wavering and uncertain conduct during the siege of Bassein, have wondered how they came by their Indian empire. The answer to that question is to

<sup>1</sup> This treaty is known in history as the treaty of Bhalki. It was concluded on November 25, 1752.

be found in their struggles with French in southern India. In chapter XXXVI I described how the gallant de Bussy, in face of tremendous odds, stormed the fortress of Jinji. From that disaster Mahomed Ali escaped; afterwards he took shelter in Trichinopoly. In his despair he appealed to the English and they, correctly judging that the further growth of French power would mean their own expulsion, resolved to answer his appeal. Their first efforts were not successful. A relieving force under Captain Gingen was defeated at Volkonda and in several subsequent engagements. In the meantime Chanda Sahib and his French allies closely besieged Trichinopoly, which, so far as man could foresee, was a doomed city.

It was at this point that there appeared in the ranks of the English a genius of the first order. On September 29, 1725, in the small Shropshire town of Market Drayton was born a sickly child, to whom his parents gave the name of Robert Clive. His father was a struggling solicitor, to whom the practice of the law had brought but little profit. Unwilling to condemn his son to a profession in which he had himself earned so little wealth, his attention was drawn to the East by the large fortunes brought home about that time by men engaged in Indian trade. He obtained for his son a writership in the service of the East India Company and on March 10, 1743 the *Winchester*, a 500-ton ship owned by the Company left the Thames, carrying on board the founder of the English empire in India. It was not until June 1744, more than a year later, that Clive, a boy of seventeen, landed in Madras to begin his career. His salary was five pounds a year and his work consisted chiefly of trading on a small scale with Indian merchants and of attending long, compulsory services in church. A year or two of such a life would probably have killed Clive, but on September 24, 1744 its monotony was broken by the news that France and England were again at war<sup>1</sup>. The fall of Madras and the siege of Pondicherry have already been related. It was at that siege that Clive, who had volunteered for active service, had his first real experience of war. He was present at the capture of Devicottah, stormed by the English on behalf of Shahaji, the raja of Tanjore, who had been driven from his throne by his half-brother Pratapsing. He subsequently took part in the disastrous fight at Volkonda and barely escaped capture. But wherever he had served, his courage and resource had won him the high esteem of his commanding officers. So great was now his reputation that he could without presumption submit to the Governor-in-Council a plan to restore the fallen fortunes of his country.

Clive's plan was at once simple and daring. It was to relieve Trichinopoly by a march into the enemy's country. Chanda Sahib in his anxiety to reduce his rival's last stronghold had denuded his own capital, Arcot. Let the English take Arcot, said Clive, and Chanda Sahib would, to recover it, raise the siege of Trichinopoly. The Madras Council, dominated by his genius, approved his plan. On

<sup>1</sup> War was actually declared in March 1744, but the news took six months to reach India.

September 6, 1751, Clive left Madras. On the 11th, he entered Arcot under cover of a thunderstorm and the reduced garrison, terrified alike by the storm and the suddenness of the attack, fled without opposing him. The fall of Arcot had no effect on the serene mind of Dupleix and he ordered the siege of Trichinopoly to be pressed with greater vigour than before. But he could not soothe the fears of his ally. Chanda Sahib detached his son Raju Sahib with ten thousand men to win back the capital of the Carnatic. The details of the siege of Arcot live for ever in the glowing pages of Macaulay and need not be repeated here. It began on October 4, and on November 25, the baffled besiegers retreated to Vellore. The valour of the defenders, aided by a body of Maratha horse under Murarirao Ghorpade, a great nephew of Santaji Ghorpade, had triumphantly held against all assaults the great city. Clive now set himself to imitate the French methods of training Indian soldiers. Fired by his spirit and subjected to strict discipline, the English sepoy soon became the equal of the French. Reinforcements came from England, success followed success, until at last, on June 13, 1752, not Trichinopoly, but the besieging army of Chanda Sahib, surrendered to the English. Chanda Sahib was beheaded and Mahomed Ali was proclaimed by his English allies nawab of the Carnatic. The cost of this disastrous expedition alienated the sympathies of the French East India Company from Dupleix. They wanted not glory, but dividends, and, impatient at his failure to provide them, they resolved to recall him. They sent in his place a Monsieur Godeheu; and on October 14, 1754, the greatest Frenchman of his time left India for ever. Anxious to secure peace at any price, Godeheu directed his officers to act strictly on the defensive. The result was as might have been anticipated. The morale of the French armies declined, while that of the English armies rose. On December 13, Monsieur Godeheu obtained from the Madras Government a contemptuous peace, by which he sacrificed the French claims in the Carnatic and recognized Mahomed Ali as nawab. De Bussy's name was omitted from the treaty and he still remained supreme at the court of the Nizam, Salabat Jang.

The success of the English arms against the French, for a short time deemed invincible, had deeply impressed the discerning mind of Balaji Bajirao. He resolved to use the English to remove French influence from the dominions of the Nizam, which he secretly hoped to annex to his own. He cultivated friendly relations with Bouchier, the Governor of Bombay, and invited him to join the Marathas in an attack on Janjira. This invitation Bouchier declined, pleading the long alliance between the English and the Sidis. In return he invited the Peshwa to join him in the destruction of the Angres. This proposal a man so far-sighted as the Peshwa would certainly not have accepted, had events not favoured the English. The quarrel between Sambhaji Angre and Manaji Angre had caused the war between King Shahu and the Portuguese, and had ended in the Maratha conquest of Salsette and Bassein. Sambhaji retained the fortress of Suvarnadurg and Vijayadurg, or Gheria. Kolaba

remained with Manaji. Sambhaji had always kept near him his half-brother Tulaji, and on Sambhaji's death, not long after the fall of Bassein, Tulaji succeeded to Sambhaji's share of the great Kanhoji Angre's inheritance. Tulaji kept alive his brother's family feuds and added to them other feuds of his own making. He quarrelled with Sadashivrao and carried off the ladies of Manaji's household. So outrageous was his conduct that Brahmendraswami felt constrained to write him a letter of reproach, in which he implored him to be reconciled with Manaji and to join with him in the destruction of the Sidis.<sup>1</sup> The shameless Tulaji, unmoved by this saintly epistle, continued to plunder the ships of all nations and even to levy contributions from the Peshwa's own territories. He affected to be the ally of Ramraja and of Tarabai, and defied the usurper, as he styled Balaji, to reduce him to obedience. Nor was it a light task to do so. Tulaji's infantry numbered thirty thousand. His numerous artillery was served by European gunners and his sixty war-ships were the terror of the Indian Ocean. To Ramaji Mahadev Biwalkar the turbulence of Tulaji Angre was particularly obnoxious. As *Sarsubhedar* of the Konkan, Ramaji Mahadev had jurisdiction over Salsette, Bassein, Thana and Kolaba. At Kalyan, his headquarters, he built a stately mansion, still the home of his descendants. At Thana the temple of Koupineswar still perpetuates his name, and in his house in that city British judges to-day dispense law and justice. It was Ramaji Mahadev's duty to collect the Angre tribute but, so far from paying it, Angre cut off the noses of the unfortunate men sent to collect it. He followed up this insolence by storming the fort of Ratnagiri, held by Amatya Bawadekar in the Peshwa's interest. To punish the sea-rover was impossible, so long as he held the great forts of Suvarnadurg and Vijayadurg; so, with a skill sharpened by hatred, Ramaji Mahadev strove to unite in a league against Tulaji, his brother Manaji Angre, the English and the Peshwa. The alliance of the English and of Manaji was easily obtained. But the Peshwa was for long reluctant to call in foreign aid against a Maratha subject. At last Tulaji's excesses and Ramaji's insistence won Balaji over. On March 19, 1755, a treaty was signed by the English and the Marathas. The English were to command the allied fleets. Their reward was to be the forts of Bankot and Himmatgad together with five villages and also half the ships captured by the allies. The remaining forts, with their treasures and armament, were to become the property of the Peshwa. On March 22, 1755, the English fleet weighed anchor. Their squadron consisted of the *Protector*, the *Bombay*, the *Swallow*, the *Triumph* and the *Viper*. They were under the command of an able and skilful sailor, Commodore James. At Chaul, thirty miles from Bombay, the English squadron met the Maratha fleet. It numbered sixty-seven galleys and barges, locally known as gallivats and grabs. On board were ten thousand Maratha troops. On April 2 the allied fleet reached Suvarnadurg. Eighty miles south of Bombay, Suvarnadurg stood on a low irregular island

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix,

about a quarter of a mile from the shore. The fortifications were built out of the solid rock and the channel was protected by three forts named Goa, Fatehdurg and Connoidurg. On April 2 and 3, Commodore James bombarded Angre's fortresses without result. On April 4 the outer strongholds struck their colours. Only Suvarnadurg remained. But for months past Ramaji Mahadev had been corrupting its garrison. Thus, when a landing party from the ships disembarked to carry it by storm, they met with little or no resistance.

On the fall of the outer forts, Tulaji had fled to Vijayadurg, where he remained in safety until the following year. The approach of the monsoon made Commodore James anxious to return to Bombay, which he did on May 17. Ramaji Mahadev, reinforced by a strong body of troops under Shamsher Bahadur, the son of Bajirao and Mastani, took all Tulaji's lands in the neighbourhood of the conquered fortress. Another detachment under Khandoji Mankar drove Tulaji's soldiers from the villages near Vijayadurg. The attack on Vijayadurg itself was postponed until the next dry season.

In the meantime the English Government had decided to drive de Bussy from the Deccan. Their plan was to invade, together with an allied Maratha force, the Nizam's dominions, and force him to dismiss de Bussy. It was too far to do this from the Carnatic. The starting-point, therefore, of the English expedition was to be Bombay. In March 1754, Admiral Watson sailed for the East Indies with six ships of the line. They had on board the 39th regiment of 700 men, and some 240 gunners and recruits for the Company's regiments. On April 23, 1755 Clive, who had been to England to recruit his health, sailed for Bombay on the *Stretham*, one of a squadron of ships that carried several hundred more English soldiers. The second squadron reached Bombay in October 1755, and found Admiral Watson's ships already in the harbour. Clive was the senior military officer and took command of the troops. He learnt to his dismay that the Bombay Government, alarmed at the cost of the expedition to the Nizam's dominions, had made the recent truce with Godeheu an excuse for abandoning it. They decided instead to use the expeditionary force for the reduction of Vijayadurg. That fortress stands about a hundred miles lower down the coast than Suvarnadurg. On February 7, 1756, the fleet sailed from Bombay. Khandoji Mankar's force had been camped round Vijayadurg since the previous November and was engaged with Tulaji Angre in negotiations for its surrender. On seeing the great strength of the English armada, Tulaji fled in terror from the doomed stronghold and took shelter in Khandoji Mankar's lines. Neither Khandoji Mankar nor Ramaji Mahadev wished any longer to storm Vijayadurg, since Tulaji was in their power and could be forced to surrender it at any moment. But the English commanders resented the separate negotiations of the Marathas, and on April 12, 1756, their attack began. By 6 36 p.m. Angre's entire fleet had been destroyed and the English colours flew over Vijayadurg. Tulaji spent the rest of his life in captivity, first in Chandan Wandan

fort near Satara and afterwards at Sholapur. The Peshwa annexed his lands.

After this brilliant feat of arms Watson and his squadron sailed for Madras, which they reached on May 14, 1756. On June 22, Clive was appointed Governor of Madras. On July 14, 1756, the news reached him that the nawab of Bengal, Suraj-ud-Daulah, had declared war on the English. It will be remembered that in 1750 Ali Vardi Khan ceded to the Marathas the province of Orissa by way of settlement for the *chauth* of Bengal. He lived for six years after making this cession, dying in 1756 at the ripe age of eighty. To his dying day he remained on friendly terms with the English, whose settlement, founded by Job Charnock at Satanathu Hath, or the cotton-thread market, had grown into the rich emporium of Calcutta. On Ali Vardi Khan's death his grandson, Suraj-ud-Daulah succeeded him. He had seen with apprehension the position reached by the English in the Carnatic and by the French at Aurangabad, and the fall of Vijayadurg added to his fears. The erection of fortifications round Calcutta and the refusal of the English merchants to surrender a certain Kishindas, his aunt's lover and a conspirator against his throne, furnished Suraj-ud-Daulah with an excuse, and on May 28, 1756 he marched with thirty thousand men against Calcutta.<sup>1</sup>

In August the news of the declaration of war was confirmed by worse news still. On June 26, 1756, Calcutta had fallen after a three days' siege and the survivors of the garrison had, all save a handful, perished in the Black Hole. War was imminent between France and England. In Chandernagore was a large French garrison and at Aurangabad was de Bussy, the one man in India whose talents as a general equalled those of Clive. A junction between the French forces and the nawab's army meant the permanent extinction of the English settlements in Bengal. The Peshwa seems to have been deeply shocked at the misfortunes of his allies. He begged Drake, the Governor of Calcutta, not to make peace with the nawab, and offered him the assistance of 120,000 horse. The offer was declined; but Balaji redoubled his intrigues at Aurangabad, with the result that de Bussy, as we shall see hereafter, so far from being able to send help to Bengal, was forced to struggle for his very existence. On their side the English acted with promptitude and vigour. On December 9, Watson and Clive with an English army sailed up the Hughli. On January 2, they retook Calcutta. With consummate skill, Clive lulled the nawab with hopes of an alliance, while he prepared for an attack on Chandernagore. On March 23, after a gallant defence, Chandernagore fell, and Clive marched against the nawab. On June 23, 1757, was fought the memorable battle of Plassey. In a single day Clive overthrew the great structure reared by Ali Vardi Khan; and the whole vast province of Bengal, towards which the Marathas had often cast longing eyes, became the spoil of the English merchants. In barely ten years the English had risen from petty traders to be the only real rivals of the Maratha people.

<sup>1</sup> Forrest, *Life of Clive*, p. 429.

## CHAPTER XLI

### BALAJI TRIUMPHS OVER DE BUSSY

A D 1753 TO 1757

It is now necessary to revert to affairs in the Nizam's dominions and to southern India. In the troubled times that followed the return of Shahu, the Maratha possessions in the south of India fell away one after the other. At first so large a number of petty chieftains assumed the title of nawab and established themselves at various spots, that the great Nizam-ul-Mulk threatened to scourge any officer who dared to call himself nawab without the Nizam's permission. This drastic threat reduced the number of nawabs to five. Of these the greatest was the nawab of the Carnatic, then came the Afghan nawabs of Kadapa, Sira, Kurnul and Savanur. In addition to the five nawabs, several Hindu rajas had made themselves independent, of these the most important were the rajas of Bednur and Tanjore. Bednur, according to local legend, had been founded in 1560 by two brothers who are known as *nalaks*, or headmen, of the petty village of Kiladi, to the north-west of Maisur, or, as the English call it, Mysore.<sup>1</sup> They happened to find a vampire's treasure and appeased the vampire by the sacrifice of a human victim. By means of their newly-gotten wealth they were able to conquer a strip of territory, for which they got a grant from the raja of Vijayanagar. Their descendants moved to Ikkeri, where the Italian traveller Pietro della Valle met them. From Ikkeri Sivappa Nayak moved to Bidururu, or the bamboo town, now known as Bednur. So great was the fortune of Sivappa Nayak and his descendants that at the beginning of the eighteenth century the rajas of Bednur ruled over ten thousand square miles.

On Shahaji's death, as already related, Vyankoji, the brother of Shivaji, became raja of Tanjore. Vyankoji had three sons, of whom Tukoji alone had issue. Two of Tukoji's sons survived him. One, Sayaji, was legitimate, the other, Pratapsing, was the son of a concubine. Tukoji towards the end of his reign fell under the control of a Musulman officer. On his death the Musulman officer raised Sayaji to the throne, but in 1741 dispossessed him in favour of Pratapsing. The new prince was a man of some vigour and resource, and freed himself from his protector by assassination. Sayaji escaped to the shelter of Madras.

At Gooti were established the family of Santaji Ghorpade. Their leader was the gallant Murarirao Ghorpade, Santaji's great nephew, by whose help Clive was able successfully to defend Arcot. Lastly, a new and powerful state had grown up round the great fort of Shrirangapatan, or the town of the god Krishna, known to English

<sup>1</sup> Maisur takes its name from Mahishasura, the buffalo-headed demon, slain by the goddess Parvati, or Kali.



writers as Seringapatam. The tale of its growth is shortly as follows.

At the close of the fourteenth century two Rajputs, Vijayaraja and Krishnaraja, who claimed descent from the divine Krishna, left their town, Dwarka, and journeyed south in search of adventure, romance and fortune. In the course of their wanderings they reached the town of Hadinad close to Mysore. At Hadinad they found what they had been seeking. The local *wadiar*, or prince, had gone mad and a neighbouring chief demanded from him his daughter's hand or, in the alternative, his family lands and possessions. The father's deranged mind was incapable either of consent or refusal. The prince's relatives appealed to the two young Rajputs, who by their craft slew the hateful suitor and by their valour seized his state. As a reward Vijayaraja obtained the hand of the grateful princess, and he and his brother adopted the *lingayat* faith of their new subjects. For two hundred years Vijayaraja's descendants were satisfied with their small principality. In 1565, the defeat and death of Ramraja, king of Vijayanagar, to whom they were subject, shook his kingdom to its foundations. It gradually fell to pieces and the former vassals of Vijayanagar strove with each other for the fragments. In 1609, Raja Wodiar, seventh in descent from Vijayaraja, seized the fortresses of Shrirangapatana; to celebrate this event he renounced the *lingayat* doctrines and he and his family became once more worshippers of the god Krishna. In 1699, the Emperor Aurangzib had planned the subjugation of Mysore, but the ruling chief, Chikka Devaraja, who had skilfully increased his territories at the expense of his neighbours, sent the Emperor so tactful an embassy that Aurangzib changed his mind and, receiving the chieftain's homage, gave him the title of Raja Jaga Deva and an ivory throne. Chikka Devaraja's successors were men without capacity and their power fell into the hands of their ministers. In 1733 the direct descent ended with the death of Dodda Krishnaraja, and thereafter the new chiefs were elected at the pleasure or the whim of their commanders-in-chief, best known by their official title of *Dalwais*.<sup>1</sup>

It will be remembered that, shortly after Bajirao's appointment as Peshwa, a quarrel arose between him and Shripatrao the *Pratinidhi* as to the royal policy. The latter pressed for the consolidation of the Maratha possessions and then a re-conquest of Shivaji's southern acquisitions. Bajirao had successfully urged a direct thrust at the heart of the Moghul empire. The thrust had been fatal. To use Balaji's own simile, the trunk had been struck down and the branches had fallen of themselves. It only remained for the Marathas to gather them. This Balaji resolved to do and 'We must conquer the whole Deccan' became the common catchword of the court and the army. Had Ghazi-ud-din lived and mounted the throne by the aid of Maratha arms, Balaji would surely have reached his goal. But behind Salabat Jang stood de Bussy with his French soldiers, and trained artillery and infantry, whose value had been shown in the fighting of 1751. To the riddance, therefore, of de Bussy from the court of the Nizam,

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix for the genealogy of the chiefs of Mysore.

the Peshwa devoted all the resources of his acute and powerful mind. In his efforts he received ample help from his agent at the Nizam's court, Shyamji Govind Dikshit. So long as de Bussy remained at his post, Balaji's schemes made little headway. The fort at Hyderabad to which Salabat Jang had moved was at a safe distance from the Maratha frontier and was garrisoned by de Bussy's troops. Their cannon threatened the town, at the same time, so strict was their discipline and so exemplary their conduct, that they won the esteem and affection of the townspeople. In 1753, however, de Bussy was laid low by an illness so severe that a change to the sea-coast became necessary for his cure. He was carried to Machlipatan, now known as Masulipatam, a town near the mouth of the Kistna river, and his illness and departure gave his enemies their chance. On the assassination of Raja Raghunathdas, the post of diwan to the Nizam had, as already related, fallen vacant and Salabat Jang had, on de Bussy's advice, appointed to it Sayad Lashkar Khan. This man's affected friendship had deceived de Bussy; but he really detested the French because of their overthrow of Nasir Jang, for whom Lashkar Khan had felt a deep affection. He was in constant correspondence with Balaji and, as soon as de Bussy had left for the sea-coast, he began to work in the Peshwa's interest. He encouraged, nay pressed Goupil, de Bussy's lieutenant, to relax the strictness of his discipline. Drunkenness and disorder took the place of order and discipline, and the French soon became as hateful as formerly they had been popular. Sayad Lashkar Khan declared himself unable to pay the troops, and advised the officers to collect their pay by plundering the neighbouring districts. Goupil, deceived by his enemy's courtly manners, divided his small force into raiding detachments. Having thus reduced Goupil's strength, Sayad Lashkar Khan persuaded Salabat Jang to return to Aurangabad, a spot at once nearer to Balaji and further from de Bussy. While the French cause was thus tottering to its fall, de Bussy lay sick at Masulipatam. But at the news of danger his ardent spirit triumphed over illness. He returned at full speed to Hyderabad, recalled his detachments and forced the governor of that city to pay his troops. Their confidence restored, de Bussy led them in October 1753 against Aurangabad. The miserable Sayad lost courage as soon as his schemes were penetrated. He made no effort to stop the march of the French, and on December 4, he was forced to sign on behalf of Salabat Jang a grant to de Bussy of a great tract of land along the eastern coast, 470 miles long and from thirty to a hundred miles wide. It was watered by two noble rivers, the Godavari and the Kistna, and included the towns of Vizagapatam, Rajahmundry and Ellore. The tract was known as the Northern Circars, a name that it still bears. De Bussy was now independent of both Salabat Jang and his minister, and he proceeded to raise fresh troops and to govern the assigned lands with a moderation and wisdom that did him the greatest honour.

Baffled by the cowardice of Sayad Lashkar Khan, Balaji did not despair. He urged him to fresh plots; and when the Nizam replaced

the Sayad by one Shah Nawaz Khan, Balaji entered into close relations with him. This was easily done; for Shah Nawaz Khan had also been a devoted adherent of Nasir Jang and he hated the French as cordially as the Sayad did. The recall of Dupleix by the French East India Company and the recognition of Mahomed Ali by Godeheu also aided Balaji's policy. The Nizam was vexed beyond measure at the French recognition of his enemy as the occupant of one of his own vassal thrones without his previous consent. De Bussy did his best to smooth matters over, but his position at the Nizam's court was greatly shaken. To complete his downfall Shah Nawaz Khan advised Salabat Jang to demand the Moghul tribute from Mysore. This proposal he hoped de Bussy would oppose, as the Mysore Government were then actively helping the French. De Bussy was, however, equal to the occasion. He openly approved the advice and secretly sent a warning to the *Dalwai*, or commander-in-chief, of Mysore. Having thus done all he could for his allies, he took the direction of the invading army. Three days after crossing the Mysore frontier, he was in sight of Seringapatam. The unfortunate Mysore Government were completely paralysed by the absence of their troops and the celerity of de Bussy's movements. Worse news, however, awaited them. A great Maratha army under Balaji's own leadership now invaded Mysore from the west. This was not the first time that the Marathas had invaded southern India. As I have related in the early part of this history, Shivaji had conquered a dominion that stretched south of the Tungabhadra from sea to sea. Bajirao had again penetrated southward in 1726. In 1747 Sadashivrao had led thither a large army and had annexed nearly half the lands then ruled over by the nawab of Savanur. The expedition of 1754-55 was conducted on a great scale. From every village through which his army passed, Balaji extorted one-fourth of the revenue, either in cash or in bills. Several strong places were stormed, the garrisons killed and the treasure-chests seized. Among them was the fortress of Hole Honnur on the river Bhadra, one of the confluent of the Turgabhadra. The Peshwa was still deeply in debt, as the result of the extravagance of Shahu and of his own father Bajirao. He was determined to make his government solvent at the expense of Mysore and he was merciless in his exactions. He joined Salabat Jang's army beneath the walls of Seringapatam. In the meantime the *Dalwai* had been forced to promise to the Nizam a ransom of fifty-two lakhs of rupees. He had already stripped the rich jewels from the temple images of Seringapatam and from the arms and wrists of the royal ladies, but even so he had collected only one-third of the sum claimed. The Peshwa now demanded a further vast sum as arrears of his tribute. De Bussy, on behalf both of the Nizam and the *Dalwai*, obtained an audience of the Brahman prince. This was the first time that these two eminent men had met. Balaji was deeply impressed by de Bussy's bearing, his studied courtesy, his unruffled temper, and above all by his vast capacity for military and civil affairs. He listened attentively to the French general's address and was led to the view that it was useless to make further demands on Mysore. The

Peshwa had already obtained by plunder on the march more than enough to settle his debts, and with this he agreed to remain content. He did not, however, give up his plan of removing de Bussy from the counsels of Salabat Jang; but he modified it and determined after removing him from Aurangabad to employ him in his own service at Poona.

The Peshwa withdrew his army from Seringapatam, but he overran Jamkhandi and fought a series of actions at Harihar, Bagalkot and Mundlagi. The campaign continued all through the winter and summer of 1755. In January 1755, Mahadji Purandare was given a separate command to plunder Bednur. This duty he effectually performed, but in the performance he quarrelled with Muzaffar Khan, the commandant of the Maratha artillery. The latter had been trained by de Bussy and had left his service for that of the Peshwa. He now deserted the Peshwa's service for that of the nawab of Savanur. Early in April 1755, the Peshwa returned to Poona and, as already related, engaged at once in the war against Tulaji Angre. Immediately the monsoon of 1755 had passed, the tireless Peshwa was once again at the head of his southern army. He had appointed Panse to the command of his artillery, but he deeply resented the desertion of Muzaffar Khan. He demanded his surrender of the nawab of Savanur. The latter returned a haughty answer and leagued himself with the Maratha chief, Murarirao Ghorpade, who would not acknowledge the Peshwa, and with the nawabs of Kadapa and Kurnul. Against this formidable league the Peshwa invoked the help of the Nizam. He justly represented that a league of Afghan nawabs supported by Murarirao Ghorpade would, after defying the Peshwa, repudiate the suzerainty of the Nizam. Shah Nawaz Khan supported the Peshwa's agent, and an allied Moghul and Maratha force marched into the country of Savanur. In the forefront of the Maratha army were many famous leaders—Mulharrao Holkar, Vithal Shivdev Vinchurkar and Naro Shankar. Raghujii Bhosle was absent, for earlier in the year, on February 14, 1755, that gallant old chief had died of dysentery, and thirteen Maratha ladies had, in his honour, thrown themselves on his flaming pyre. He had tried to divide his state among his four sons, Janoji and Sabaji, Mudhoji and Bimbaji; but the brothers quarrelled and the Peshwa turned their disputes to his own advantage. He conferred Raghujii's title of Sena Sahib Subba on Janoji, recognized him as his father's heir and obtained from him a *nasar* of seven lakhs. In the expedition against Savanur both Janoji and Mudhoji were present.

The Peshwa at the head of a great army met the Pathan nawabs and Murarirao Ghorpade not far from Savanur and inflicted on them a severe defeat, that they were forced to take shelter in the fortress. On Salabat Jang's arrival the siege began. De Bussy had raised his artillery to the highest pitch of efficiency, and the tremendous effect of his cannon at this siege has passed into legend.<sup>1</sup> Murarirao Ghorpade, seeing the confederates' cause hopeless, entered into

<sup>1</sup> It is said that de Bussy fired 125,000 shells into Savanur (*Riyasat*).

negotiations with de Bussy and deserted to the Peshwa. Eventually the nawab of Savanur sued for peace and obtained it in return for an indemnity of eleven lakhs, large cessions of territory and the surrender of Muzaffar Khan, who once more became an artillery officer of the Peshwa. In the course of this expedition the Marathas acquired among other places Belgaum, Sholapur and Hubli.<sup>6</sup> Peace was declared in May 1756, and in June 1756, as I have already mentioned, the nawab of Bengal stormed Calcutta. Balaji feared that a junction between the French and the nawab of Bengal would be fatal to the English. He now evolved a fresh plan, by which he hoped to paralyse the French, drive de Bussy from the Nizam's service, and employ him in his own. In the course of the siege of Savanur, Murarirao Ghorpade had, to induce de Bussy to favour his negotiations, returned him a bond which the French authorities had given Murarirao in recognition of his services against the English at Trichinopoly. The French authorities since Godeheu's ignominious peace were no longer able to redeem it. De Bussy took the bond and spoke on Murarirao's behalf both to the Peshwa and the Nizam. The Peshwa came to hear of the bond and told Shah Nawaz Khan. The latter told the Nizam, at the same time painting de Bussy's conduct in the blackest colours. While Salabat Jang had received nothing, said Shah Nawaz Khan, de Bussy had behind his master's back received a rich bribe from Ghorpade. Other Musulman nobles, jealous of de Bussy's power, supported Shah Nawaz Khan, with the result that the Nizam formally dismissed de Bussy from his service. Immediately this blow had been struck, Shah Nawaz Khan invited the English to attack de Bussy's force and the Peshwa to have him assassinated. Both invitations were declined. The English had no troops to spare, and the generous Brahman not only scorned to assassinate the French general but sent to his help a large body of horse under Malharrao Holkar, offering him the same pay and advantages that he had enjoyed at Hyderabad. De Bussy, however, declined the gracious offer and, after courteously dismissing the Maratha escort, marched from the Nizam's camp to Hyderabad. With incomparable skill he evaded or swept aside the forces sent to attack him and, reaching his goal in safety, established himself in a garden known as the Char Mahal, or the Four Palaces. From his new camp he sent for reinforcements to Pondicherry and Masulipatam. Moracin, the French governor of Masulipatam, sent a Scotch officer named Law, a brother of the famous speculator of the d'Orleans regency, with a detachment of one hundred and sixty Europeans, seven hundred sepoy and five guns. A further body of seven hundred men and six guns was sent from Pondicherry and the two forces, having met, set out to join de Bussy. As they advanced their difficulties grew and enemies sprang up from every defile, thicket and river bed. At last, when at Meliapur, only seventeen miles from Hyderabad, Law took post and sent word to de Bussy that he could advance no farther. Back came the stern answer, 'I bid you march forward in the name of the King.' Law dared not disobey and once more the advance began. De Bussy did all that he could to help it.

He had induced Ramchandra Jadhav, the son of the rebel Chandrasen Jadhav and Rav Rambha Janoji Nimbalkar of Karmala, two of the three Maratha leaders sent against Law, to take no active part against him. He also made a feigned attack on the Nizam's troops near his own camp, and simultaneously sent a force to escort Law during the last few miles of his march. Helped in this way, Law after very severe fighting succeeded in reaching de Bussy. An hour after Law's arrival in the French camp, de Bussy received a letter from Salabat Jang offering to reinstate him. De Bussy accepted the offer and on August 20, after passing through a crisis which no ordinary man would have survived, he was publicly reinstated by the Nizam in all his titles, lands and dignities.

De Bussy was now, it would seem, free to act with the nawab of Bengal; but the resources of the Peshwa's diplomacy were inexhaustible. While de Bussy was surmounting insuperable obstacles in and near Hyderabad, the agents of Shah Nawaz Khan, prompted by Balaji, had raised a revolt in the Northern Circars. Directly the rainy season permitted, de Bussy was forced to proceed there. On November 16, the French general with five hundred Frenchmen and four thousand sepoys set out for the assigned districts. In three months he had reduced them to obedience, and he was preparing to march northward to relieve Chandernagore, when he received the fatal news that the city had fallen on March 23. It was useless now to go north, but vengeance might still be exacted from the English settlements in the east and south. He took successively the English factories at Vizagapatam, Madapollam, Bandarmalanka and Injiram, and was getting ready to sweep the English from southern India when he was again stayed by news from Hyderabad. In his absence Shah Nawaz Khan, in league with the Peshwa, had woven a most formidable plot not only against de Bussy but against Salabat Jang himself (May, 1757). Their intention was to confine Salabat Jang and to declare his brother Nizam Ali *Subhedar* of the Deccan. Shah Nawaz Khan seized Daulatabad, pretending to be afraid of his own troops. He invited Salabat Jang to visit him there, but from this folly he was dissuaded by the French officers of his escort. Shah Nawaz Khan then refused to surrender the fortress. Nizam Ali, who was governor of Berar, pretended to be shocked at the rebellion against his brother and marched with all speed to Hyderabad, really intending to seize Salabat Jang in his own camp. At the same time a Maratha army under Janoji Bhosle invaded the Nizam's dominions from the north; and another Maratha army under the Peshwa's eldest son Vishvasrao concentrated on the Godavari. A third Maratha force attacked and defeated Ramchandra Jadhav, who was marching to Salabat Jang's aid, and besieged him in the town of Sindkhed. The leader of this third contingent was Madhavrao Sindia and against him Nizam Ali pretended to march. Madhavrao Sindia, acting under the Peshwa's instructions, allowed Nizam Ali to relieve Sindkhed. Nizam Ali offered the Peshwa the price agreed on secretly for his assistance, namely, the cession of a tract of land producing twenty-five lakhs of revenue, together with the fort of Naldurg. Balaji and Nizam Ali then marched

as friends to Aurangabad, and the next step would assuredly have been the deposition of Salabat Jang. But, before this could be achieved, de Bussy came by forced marches from the Northern Circars. His arrival foiled the plot. He recovered Daulatabad and overawed the conspirators. Nizam Ali, in his rage at his failure, murdered Haidar Jang, de Bussy's confidential agent. He then fled for his life to Burhanpur and in the tumult that followed Shah Nawaz Khan was killed. The Marathas withdrew, but were consoled for their check by the capture of Shivner. That mighty fortress close to Junnar had long been coveted by the Maratha government. It was the birthplace of the great king, who had more than once tried to take it. Its commandant, Alamkhan, now surrendered it, induced to this act of treachery by the handsome bribe offered him by Uddhav Vireshwar Chitale, a Maratha officer. De Bussy, for the moment master of the situation, made Basalat Jang, Salabat Jang's remaining brother, diwan, and proposed through him to govern the entire Deccan. It might thus seem that de Bussy had won in his struggle with Balaji. In reality the latter had reached his goal. While de Bussy was struggling to save Salabat Jang, the English had fought and won Plassey and conquered Bengal. Nothing that the French could now do was of any use. De Lally, the new French governor-general, anxious to concentrate his troops for an attack on Madras, recalled de Bussy, and on July 21, 1758, the great soldier said good-bye to Salabat Jang for ever. The attack on Madras failed. The Northern Circars were conquered by the English and the French were expelled from the Nizam's dominions. It was thus Balaji who had won in the contest and it was not long before he reaped the fruits of his victory.

The Peshwa's plans were favoured by the turbulence and faithlessness of Nizam Ali. On reaching Burhanpur the latter levied a heavy contribution and proceeded to raise troops. He was soon joined by Ibrahim Khan Gardi with a corps of artillery. This celebrated individual had at one time been a favourite officer of de Bussy and had become an expert in the French method of serving their cannon. He had left the service of the French for that of Nizam Ali, had rejoined de Bussy at Hyderabad, and on his recall had once more thrown in his lot with Nizam Ali. His surname Gardi was a corruption of the French word *garde*. Basalat Jang persuaded Janoji Bhosle to attack the rebel, but by the aid of Ibrahim Gardi's artillery, Nizam Ali defeated the Maratha leader. Janoji Bhosle, thereafter, on instructions received from the Peshwa, joined the pretender's cause. Another event helped Nizam Ali. Salabat Jang, in answer to an appeal from his French friends, marched to relieve Masulipatam, then besieged by the English. In his absence Nizam Ali took Aurangabad and marched on Hyderabad. In all haste Salabat Jang patched up a treaty with the English and returned to drive away his brother. But Nizam Ali's position had become so strong that Salabat Jang was forced to accept him as his diwan and to dismiss Basalat Jang. Nizam Ali on his part agreed to dismiss Ibrahim Gardi, who at once entered the service of Sadashivrao.

Nizam Ali, having become supreme in his brother's viceroyalty, refused to carry out the treaty of Sakhar Khedale,<sup>1</sup> as the treaty concluded between him and the Peshwa was called. He also refused to become the subordinate ally of the Peshwa, as Balaji demanded. In spite of the Peshwa's remonstrances, he allied himself to the English. All through 1759, therefore, Balaji and Sadashivrao made extensive preparations for war. On November 9, 1759, the Peshwa's officer, Visaji Krishna Biniwale induced Kavijang, the Musulman governor of Ahmadnagar to surrender it in return for a perpetual *jaghire* of fifty thousand rupees. This act led to an open rupture between the two powers. Some delay took place in the Maratha movements by reason of Muzaffar Khan's attempt on the life of Sadashivrao. Muzaffar Khan, as will be remembered, had on the fall of Savanur re-entered the Maratha service. Sadashivrao, who disliked him, protested, but was overruled. Afterwards Sadashivrao tried to get Ibrahim Khan Gardi appointed in Muzaffar Khan's place as commandant of the Peshwa's artillery corps. Although the two Musulmans were kinsmen, Muzaffar Khan's vanity was deeply wounded. He corrupted his son-in-law, Haidar Khan, to assassinate Sadashivrao. On October 25, 1759, while Sadashivrao was sitting in his tent at Garpur, just outside Poona city, Haidar Khan entered it and struck at him with a dagger. A *silledar*, or cavalry officer, named Nagoji Guzar caught the assassin's wrist and Sadashivrao escaped with a slight wound. Haidar Khan was seized, and implicated Muzaffar Khan and a Prabhu officer called Ramchandra Narayan. The first two were instantly beheaded, the third was imprisoned for life.

Early in December 1759, the war began in earnest. Nizam Ali's cause was hopeless from the first. His finances were in disorder and his army were in arrears. They were also outnumbered by the Marathas, who were superior in arms and equipment of every kind. Still Nizam Ali could not bring himself either to carry out the treaty of Sakhar Khedale or acquiesce in the loss of Ahmadnagar, a spot dear to all Deccan Musulmans as the capital of the Nizamshahi kings and of the heroic Chand Sultan. Nizam Ali's army moved first to Bedar and then to Dharur. Sadashivrao took by storm Bahadurgad, a strong fort on the Bhima river and, hearing of the Moghul movements, sent an advance party to harass the main body and so prevent their junction with a cavalry corps of seven thousand horse under Vyankatrao Nimbalkar, a Maratha officer in the Nizam's service who was encamped at Dharur. The advance party did their work admirably and so harassed the Moghuls that they never reached their objective. While the Moghuls were skirmishing with the advance guard, Sadashivrao and Vishvasrao, the Peshwa's eldest son, came up at the head of forty thousand cavalry, five thousand regular infantry and an ample park of light artillery. The unfortunate Moghuls were attacked near Udgir and driven into the fortress of Ousha, where they were besieged for four days (January, 1760). On the fifth day the two brothers—for Salabat Jang was also in the field—sued for peace and

<sup>1</sup> Sakhar Khedale was the village where the treaty was signed.



were only granted it on the most humiliating terms. Sadashivrao demanded the cession of lands that yielded annually a crore of rupees, eventually he accepted an assignment of land worth annually sixty-two lakhs, the surrender of the great forts of Ashirgad, Daulatabad, Bijapur, Ahmadnagar and Burhanpur. Nimbalkar was no longer to remain in the Nizam's service. The terms of peace were promptly executed, save only the surrender of Daulatabad. This was stubbornly defended by the commandant, until he, too, was won over by the payment of a lakh and a half and a *jaghire* of thirty-five thousand rupees a year. The power of the Nizam was now almost as broken as the imperial power in the north. In two or three years, so the Peshwa expected with confidence, the entire viceroyalty of the Deccan would have become part of the Maratha dominion.

While the Peshwa was thus vigorously prosecuting his designs in the Deccan, he was pressing Maratha interests with hardly less energy in the extreme south. In January 1757, an army of sixty thousand men, led by the Peshwa and Sadashivrao, marched through southern India, collecting tribute. All the petty chiefs save only the nawab of Kadapa paid it readily. In March 1757, the Marathas were under the walls of Seringapatam and claimed several crores of rupees as arrears of tribute. The *Dahwai*, Nandraj, pleaded his inability to pay. Sadashivrao opened fire on Seringapatam with thirty cannon. Unfortunately a shot from one of his guns struck the temple of Shri Rang, or Vishnu, the temple from which the town derives its name. About the same time another gun burst, causing considerable loss of life. A religious panic spread through both armies because of the evil omen and they hastened to come to terms. Sadashivrao demanded thirty-six lakhs, but accepted thirty-two. Five lakhs were paid in cash; for the remaining twenty-seven lakhs fourteen districts were mortgaged. The Peshwa appointed revenue collectors over the mortgaged districts and occupied them with six thousand men. On May 16 he started to go back to Poona. The Kistna and Tungabhadra were already in flood and the troops despaired of crossing them. The Peshwa, however, worshipped the river deities, the floods abated and the main army reached Poona on June 16. A considerable force remained with Balwantrao Mehendale with orders to recover Sira, Bangalore, Ouscotta, Kolar and Balapur, the former conquests of the great king. This brought him again into conflict with the Afghan nawabs of Kadapa, Savanur and Karnul. On September 24, 1757, Balwantrao Mehendale won a great victory near Kadapa. The nawab of Kadapa was killed and his town was sacked. His cousin and heir, Abdul Nabi Khan, gallantly defended the rest of the Kadapa territory, but eventually agreed to surrender half and keep the rest. Finally Mehendale levied four and a half lakhs from the nawab of Arcot, and returned to Poona in February 1758.

The Peshwa spent the monsoon of 1757 in equipping a force to reduce Mysore; for on the departure of the main Maratha army the *Dahwai* Nandraj had broken the treaty and had driven the Marathas out of the fourteen ceded districts. On the way he intended to reduce Bednur. But, when Shah Nawaz Khan made his attempt to depose

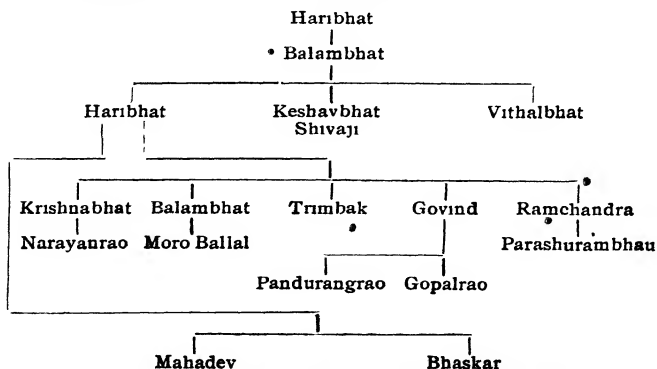
Salabat Jang in favour of Nizam Ali, the Peshwa ordered the expeditionary force to effect a junction with his own army and march on Hyderabad. The expedition, however, against Mysore was only postponed. At the beginning of 1759, the Peshwa despatched a Maratha army under Gopalrao Patwardhan to recover the fourteen districts.

The family to which Gopalrao Patwardhan belonged gave so many famous men to the Maratha empire, that it is only fitting that we should inquire into their origin. They claimed descent from one Balambhat, the son of a Chitpavan Brahman, Haribhat, who lived in Kotawada, a village in the Ratnagiri district. Balambhat had three sons, of whom the eldest, Haribhat, left his native place for Pula, a famous shrine near Chiplun, where he obtained by arduous penances, performed unremittingly for twelve years, the favour of the god Ganpati. The god's favour became manifest by Haribhat's appointment as family priest to Naropant Joshi, the founder of the Ichalkaranji state. When Balaji, the first of the Bhat Peshwas, married his daughter Anubai to Naropant's son Vyankatrao, Haribhat's fortunes rose with those of the house of Ichalkaranji. Haribhat died in 1750 at Poona, and one of his sons, Govind, founded in his father's honour the village of Haripur, on the banks of the Kistna, not far from Sangli. Besides Govind, Haribhat had six other sons—Krishnabhat, Balambhat, Trimbakpant, Mahadevbhat, Ramchandrapant and Bhaskarpant. Trimbak, Govind and Ramchandra rose to high military office and from them are descended the chiefs of Sangli, Jamkhandi, Miraj and Kurundwad. Gopalrao Patwardhan was the son of Govind Patwardhan and although a young man was already distinguished as a soldier.

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The following is the family tree of the Patwardhans.

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(Rao Bahadur Parasnis, *The Sangli State and the Harivansha Bhatkar*.)

At first all went well with the expedition. - The fourteen districts fell again into Maratha hands; and the main army besieged Bangalore, while a detachment took by storm the fort of Chennapatam, forty miles to the east of Seringapatam. It was then that the Marathas were first thwarted by the talents of Haidar Ali. This extraordinary man claimed descent from the race of the Holy Prophet himself, the famous tribe of the Koreish. One of his ancestors named Hasan, the descendant of 'Yahya, left Baghdad and came to Ajmer. There a son, Wali Mahomed, was born to him. Wali Mahomed had a son, Ali Mahomed, who migrated to Kolar in eastern Mysore, where he died, leaving four sons. The youngest of these, Fateh Mahomed was a soldier of fortune and was killed in fighting for the imperial cause against Sadat Ulla Khan, the nawab of Arcot. The latter confiscated the fallen soldier's wealth and turned his widow and two sons adrift. The elder, Shabbaz, became an officer in the Mysore service and was later joined by his younger brother, Haidar Ali. The latter soon attracted the attention of his superiors by his energy and courage, and he was now given the command of the Mysore army. By skilfully surprising Chennapatam, he forced Patwardhan to raise the siege of Bangalore. Thereafter he so harassed the Maratha leader that the latter was glad to come to terms. Patwardhan agreed to give up the fourteen districts for a sum of thirty-two lakhs. Half was paid in cash and half was advanced by the Maratha bankers with Patwardhan's army on Haidar Ali's personal security. Early in 1760, Haidar Ali returned in triumph to Seringapatam and received from his grateful king the title of Fateh Haidar Bahadur, or the Brave and Victorious Lion. Gopalrao Patwardhan, on the other hand, was reprimanded by the Peshwa 'Haidar', so he wrote to the unfortunate general, 'has destroyed your prestige'. After making peace with Mysore, Patwardhan tried to take advantage of the struggle then proceeding between the English and French round Madras. As neither side would buy his support, he seized the rich temple of Tirupati, proposing to appropriate the offerings due to the gods at the annual festival (January 1760). Even this he failed to achieve. During the rains of 1760, Patwardhan was recalled to Poona; and, before the detachment which he left behind could plunder the pilgrims, it was driven out by Mahomed Ali, nawab of Arcot.<sup>1</sup>

Thus in the year 1760, we see the Peshwa on the point of overwhelming the last fragments of Moghul rule in the Deccan; and, if in the Carnatic his troops were not so uniformly victorious, it yet seemed certain that in a year or two it also must succumb. For, on the disappearance of the Nizam's dominions, Mysore, although guarded by the genius of Haidar Ali, could certainly not have withstood the combined attack of the Peshwa's armies. That these glorious hopes were not fulfilled was due to a disaster so tremendous, that from it the Marathas never recovered. It eventually led to their subjugation by a foreign power. The events which led to that disaster will be narrated in the next chapter.

<sup>1</sup> Khare, *Itihasik Lekh Sangraha*, Vol. I, § 24.

## CHAPTER XLII

### EVENTS AT DELHI FROM 1748 TO 1760

At the close of chapter XXXV we left Ahmad Shah newly seated on the throne of Delhi. Of the few provinces that still acknowledged his sovereignty, Oudh was under the government of Safdar Jang, the nephew of Sadat Khan. The latter, originally a merchant from Khorasan, had first risen to eminence during the successful plot woven by Mahomed Shah and his mother against the Sayads. In 1737 he had, as governor of Oudh, defeated Malharrao Holkar when the latter crossed the Jamna. He was succeeded in his office by Safdar Jang, his nephew. The country round Farrukabad was in the hands of an Afghan *jaghirdar*, Kaiam Khan Bangash. The province, known now as Rohilkhand and then as Kuttahir, was in the occupation of a band of Afghan mercenary soldiers known as Rohels or Rohillas, from *roh*, the Pushtu or Afghan word for mountain. The Whig historians have depicted the Rohillas as little, if at all, lower than the angels. They were really a set of faithless and blood-thirsty mountaineers, who had made themselves especially hateful to the Hindus by their plunder of the holy places at Allahabad and Benares. About 1673 two brothers, Shah Alam and Hussein Khan, left their native hills and obtained some petty office under the Moghuls. Shah Alam's grandson, Ali Mahomed, a man of resource and courage and quite devoid of scruple, was eventually appointed governor of Sirhind. Taking advantage of the invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali, he added in 1748 to the lands already acquired by him those formerly owned by officers absent on field service. In this way he acquired the whole of Kuttahir and changed its name to Rohilkhand. The provinces of Lahore and Multan were under the government of Mir Mannu, the son of the vizier Kamar-ud-din, who in 1748 had been killed in battle against Shah Abdali.

Upon the death of Kamar-ud-din and the refusal of Nizam-ul-Mulk to be vizier, Ahmad Shah appointed Safdar Jang as his vizier. The first aim of the new administration was the destruction of the Rohilla power. Safdar Jang attempted nothing until the death of Ali Mahomed in 1749. He then induced Kaiam Khan, the *jaghirdar* of Farrukabad, to invade Rohilkhand, but the Rohillas defeated and slew him. Safdar Jang found consolation in seizing the lands of his late ally, Kaiam Jang. The latter's brother, Ahmad Khan, inflicted two severe defeats on Safdar Jang who, beside himself with anger, called in the help of Malharrao Holkar and Jayappa Sindia, the eldest son of Ranoji Sindia, who died in 1750.<sup>1</sup> Ahmad Khan in vain allied himself with the Rohillas. The allies were defeated and the Marathas, according to the author of the *Tarikh-i-Ahmad Shah*, 'ransacked the whole country, not allowing a single man to escape, and every article of money they carried away as booty.' In the following year, 1752,

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix for pedigree of the house of Sindia.

Ahmad Shah Abdali again invaded the Punjab, and Safdar Jang and the Marathas agreed to evacuate Rohilkhand on the condition that the Rohillas paid five lakhs a year to the emperor and signed bonds for fifty lakhs payable to Safdar Jang. These bonds Safdar Jang in turn handed over to Holkar and Sindia in part payment of the subsidies due by him. As these bonds were never honoured, they formed the basis of future Maratha claims on Rohilkhand.<sup>1</sup>

Early in 1752 Ahmad Shah Abdali entered the Punjab and sent an ambassador demanding the formal cession of that province. Safdar Jang, who might have induced the emperor to resist the demand, was absent in Rohilkhand. The emperor's favourite, a eunuch named Jawid, induced him to yield, and Ahmad Shah reappointed as the governor of his new possession Mir Mannu. Safdar Jang, exasperated at the cession, and at the favourite's influence, had Jawid murdered. The emperor turned for help to Ghazi-ud-din, the son and namesake of Ghazi-ud-din, the eldest son of Nizam-ul-Mulk. The father was at the time aspiring to the throne of the Deccan, and Safdar Jang got rid of his Maratha allies by sending them with the elder Ghazi-ud-din to Aurangabad. There, as we have seen, Ghazi-ud-din the elder was poisoned by the mother of Nizam Ali. Ghazi-ud-din the younger was only eighteen years old, but he was capable and energetic. Safdar Jang had secured him his father's titles and estates, and he repaid his benefactor by joining the emperor against him. Ahmad Shah, supported by Ghazi-ud-din, dismissed Safdar Jang and called in the help of Surajmal, the chief of the Jats.

For six months the troops of the contending statesmen fought daily through the streets of Delhi. At last Ghazi-ud-din called in Malharrao Holkar and Jayappa Sindia. Fearing the Maratha leaders, Safdar Jang made his peace and was formally appointed viceroy of Oudh and Allahabad. Intizam-ud-Daula, the uncle by marriage of Ghazi-ud-din, was made vizier, and Ghazi-ud-din marched with Holkar and Sindia against Dig and Bharatpur, the fortresses of Surajmal. The allies failed to take either stronghold. In their absence the emperor, who had grown to hate and fear Ghazi-ud-din worse than he had hated and feared Safdar Jang, began to plot with Surajmal against his young supporter. Surajmal agreed to help the emperor with an army, provided he would leave Delhi for Sikandra near Agra. The emperor foolishly set out without either informing Safdar Jang or providing himself with a proper escort. Before he could reach Sikandra, Malharrao Holkar surprised his camp and plundered it. The imperial insignia and baggage, the widow of Mahomed Shah, and several other princesses fell into the hands of Holkar. The emperor and a few attendants escaped back to Delhi. There worse befell him. Ghazi-ud-din raised the siege of the Jat fortresses, returned to the capital, made himself vizier at the expense of Intizam-ud-Doula, and blinded and deposed the Emperor Ahmad Shah. In his place he raised to the throne a son of Jehandar Shah with the title of Alamgir II (May 1754). Shortly afterwards

<sup>1</sup> Hamilton, *History of the Rohilla Afghans*, p. 112.



SURAJMAL, CHIEF OF THE JATS



Safdar Jang died and was buried in the beautiful mausoleum that bears his name, not far from Delhi. His son Shuja-ud-Daula became in his father's stead viceroy of Oudh and Allahabad.

The restless Ghazi-ud-din, having provoked a mutiny among his troops and quelled it with reckless daring, planned the recovery of the ceded provinces of Lahore and Multan. The occasion was favourable. Mir Mannu had fallen from his horse and died. His son had predeceased him and his widow carried on the government; her daughter was betrothed to Ghazi-ud-din. The young vizier, leaving the emperor under a guard at Delhi, proceeded to Lahore to celebrate his wedding. The widow was preparing a royal welcome for Ghazi-ud-din, when he had her treacherously seized and usurped her government. In a fury of rage the injured matron called down curses on Ghazi-ud-din and contrived to communicate with Ahmad Shah Abdali. The Afghan king flew to her rescue. Ghazi-ud-din threw himself at the invader's feet and on the widow's intercession obtained a pardon. Ahmad Shah, however, demanded money as a salve for his outraged feelings. He marched first to Delhi, where he repeated the atrocities of Nadir Shah. From Delhi he sent detachments into Oudh, and against the Jats. But it was at Mathura that Afghan cruelty reached its zenith. This holy spot attracts pilgrims from all parts of India; for there the divine Krishna, the eighth incarnation of the god Vishnu, was born. To save the infant god from the murderous hatred of his uncle Kansa,<sup>1</sup> his earthly father, Vasudeva carried the babe across the river Jamna, to give them passage the waters of the great river parted, and Vasudeva was able to hide the child in the waggon of Nanda, a cowherd of Gokula. Beyond his uncle's reach, the boy grew to manhood and in due time returned to Mathura and slew his uncle. At the time of Ahmad Shah Abdali's invasion the town was crowded with harmless pilgrims of both sexes; the Afghans slaughtered the men, outraged the women, and sacked the holy city and its beautiful temples. Happily a plague broke out among the Afghan soldiery, which forced Ahmad Shah to return to Kabul. Before he left, he married a princess of the house of Delhi and gave another in marriage to his son, afterwards Timur Shah. To protect the emperor from Ghazi-ud-din, Ahmad Shah appointed Najib-ud-Daulat as vizier. The latter was an Afghan of the Kamar Kel tribe, who had risen to eminence under Ali Mahomed. He was a man of great courage and capacity and was eminently fitted for the post. But as soon as the Afghan king had left India, Ghazi-ud-din sent an appeal to Raghunathrao, Balaji's brother, who in 1756 was levying contributions from the chiefs of Rajputana and Malwa. Raghunathrao at once joined Ghazi-ud-din and the confederates besieged Delhi. The only thought of Alamgir II was for the safety of his son Ali Gohar, and he contrived his flight, first into Rohilkhand and afterwards to the court of Shuja-ud-Daula, the viceroy of Oudh. Najib-ud-Daulat effected his escape by giving a handsome present to Malharrao Holkar, and he fled to his own *jaghire* at Saharanpur. The emperor then threw



open the gates of Delhi and perforce took Ghazi-ud-din back as his vizier.

Raghunathrao now cast his eyes northward. Ahmad Shah Abdali had left behind him as governor of the Punjab his son Timur. Mir Mannu's deputy, Adina Beg, resented the appointment and invited Raghunathrao to Lahore. In May 1758, Raghunathrao entered Lahore, driving before him Timur's army of occupation. A second army of thirty thousand men under Dattaji Sindia and Malharrao Holkar drove Najib-ud-Doulat to take post at Shukratal, a defensible position on the Ganges. A third army under Govindpant Bandela<sup>1</sup> invaded Rohilkhand, but it was defeated with heavy loss by Shuja-ud-Daula and driven across the Ganges. Ahmad Shah Abdali had learnt with the utmost indignation of his son's expulsion from the Punjab. He could not act as soon as he could have wished; for he was engaged in quelling the revolt of Nasir Khan, the Khan of Khelat. By July 1759 the Baluch rebellion had been quelled, and Ahmad Shah took the road to Shikarpur in Sind. From upper Sind the Afghan army marched up the right bank of the Indus and in September 1759 crossed that river at Peshawar and the Jamna opposite Saharanpur. From his prison at Delhi, the unfortunate Alamgir II sent him an appeal for help. Unhappily the letter fell into the hands of Ghazi-ud-din, who at once had the emperor murdered, and raised another member of the imperial house, Mohi-al-Sunnat, a son of Kam Baksh and a grandson of Aurangzib, to the Moghul throne, with the empty title of Shah Jahan, or Lord of the Universe.

In the meantime Ahmad Shah Abdali reoccupied Lahore, while the Maratha army under Dattaji Sindia and Malharrao Holkar retired before him. Malharrao Holkar, anxious to win Surajmal to the Maratha cause, withdrew his contingent from Sindia's force and moved southward. Dattaji Sindia retreated to Delhi, but refused to go farther in spite of the prayers of his wife Bhagirthabai, who was about to be confined. He posted a guard under Janrao Vable and Maloji Sindia at the crossing of the Jamna known as the Badaon Ghat. He himself with the bulk of his army cantoned at Delhi, but he sent southward the ladies of his family under the escort of Rupram Katari, one of his officers. On January 10, 1760, Dattaji Sindia celebrated at Delhi the festival of the *Makar Sankranti* with prodigious ceremony, just as if no active and resolute foe was in the field against him. The *Makar Sankranti* is the Hindu equivalent of the Christian Christmas. On that day is celebrated the winter solstice. The sun has reached the southernmost point of its course. From this moment begin the six lucky months, known as the *Uttarayan*, during which time the sun's progress is northward. In honour of this fortunate season, Hindus of both sexes rise early, worship the family gods, dress in holiday attire, and visit their friends.<sup>2</sup> As they enter a friend's house

<sup>1</sup> For an account of Govindpant Bandela see Appendix to Chap. XXXI.

<sup>2</sup> The *Makar Sankranti* now falls on the 14th January. This difference between the Christian and the Hindu calculations is due to the disregard by the latter in modern times of the precession of the equinoxes.

they present him with sugared sesamum and repeat the rhyme, *Til kha tilse ya, gul kha godse bola* (Eat the sesamum and come towards me little by little, eat the sugar and let your words be sweet).<sup>1</sup> The smallness of the sesamum seed represents the tiny changes that occur in the length of the day during the early part of the *Uttarayan*. The day, so the Hindus say, lengthens only *til til* or the size of a sesamum seed.

On the morning of January 10, 1760, Dattaji Sindia held a parade of his forces at Delhi and distributed sugared sesamum to his higher officers. It was his intention throughout the day to receive and to pay a series of formal visits. In the meantime the Abdali's spies had brought him news of Dattaji Sindia's position and also of his negligence. Effecting a junction with Najib-ud-Daulat, the Abdali forced the Jamna river at the Badaon ghat, cut to pieces Janrao Vable and his men, and marched on Delhi. Dattaji Sindia on hearing of the disaster led, with more courage than prudence, the rest of his contingent from Delhi, and attacked Ahmad Shah. His force was outnumbered and overwhelmed. He himself and his illegitimate brother Jyotaba were among the slain. Jankoji, his nephew and the son of Jayappa Sindia, was wounded but escaped with two or three thousand men, and was hotly pursued by the Afghans for several miles.

Malharrao Holkar on hearing of this disaster retreated towards Sikandra, forty miles east of Delhi and five miles from Agra. He had heard that the Rohilla chiefs had stored grain and money there to aid Ahmad Shah in his eastward march, and he hoped to seize the store. He found, however, on arrival that the Rohillas had removed their granary and money, so he rested his troops and renewed his efforts to win over Surajmal. No spot could be found more suited for repose than Sikandra, for there, in a mausoleum in the midst of a beautiful park thronged with deer and antelope, rests in an endless sleep the great Akbar. The calm of his surroundings led Holkar to neglect his usual precautions. The Shah of Afghanistan, learning his whereabouts, sent against him an active officer called Pasand Khan with fifteen thousand horse. In twenty-four hours this mobile body marched a hundred and forty miles to Delhi. Halting at the capital for a single day, Pasand Khan marched that night to Sikandra, which he reached just before dawn. Malharrao Holkar was taken completely off his guard. He fled almost naked from his camp, with only three hundred companions. The rest of his contingent was dispersed, taken or slaughtered. Ahmad Shah followed up his advantage by moving his main army to Sikandra, where he prepared to pass the rainy season.

These were not the only misfortunes that befell the Maratha leaders about this time in upper India. On the death of Abhai Singh, maharaja of Jodhpur, his son Ramsingh succeeded. At his installation, Abhai Singh's brother Bakhta Singh, although first prince of the Rahtor house, absented himself and sent by way of proxy his aged foster-nother to put the red mark of Rajput sovereignty on the brow of the new prince. Ramsingh in a fury drove her forth, asking insolently

<sup>1</sup> The present practice is to say only, *Tilgul ghya aani god'bola*.

whether his uncle took him for an ape, that he had sent a female monkey to present him with the *tika*.<sup>1</sup> This insult, deeply resented by Bakhta Singh, led to a war between uncle and nephew, in which the former was victorious. Ramsingh retaliated by poisoning his uncle, and the dispute became one between Ramsingh and Bakhta Singh's son Vijayasingh. Ramsingh asked for and obtained the help of Jayappa Sindia, who after defeating Vijayasingh besieged him in Nagore. Unable to obtain the help of the other Rajput chiefs, Vijayasingh stooped to assassination. Two soldiers, one a Rajput and the other an Afghan, disguised as camp-followers, contrived to get close to Jayappa's tent. There they feigned a violent quarrel and implored the Maratha chief to decide between them. Sindia, interested in their concocted story, let them come close to his side. Suddenly rushing at him, they drove simultaneously their daggers into his body. 'This for Jodhpur! This for Nagore!' they cried and fled. The Afghan was killed, but the Rajput, by mingling in the crowd and calling, 'Thief! Thief!' as loud as he could, diverted attention from himself and escaped. Sindia's army raised the siege, but Raghunathrao returned to Jodhpur to avenge Jayappa's death. Instead, however, of deposing Vijayasingh,<sup>2</sup> he deserted the cause of Ramsingh and acknowledged Vijayasingh as maharaja, accepting by way of *mund katai*, or blood-money, the town and fort of Ajmer.

The news of these calamities reached the Peshwa in the Deccan after the great victory of Udgir. Sadashivrao, whose head had been turned by recent success, begged that he and Vishvasrao might be given the command of an army to expel Ahmad Shah Abdali and establish Maratha rule as far as Attock. Raghunathrao's experience of northern warfare gave him the better claim. But, although a skilful commander, he was profuse and unbusinesslike, and his last campaigns had brought nothing but debts to the Maratha treasury, whereas the expeditions of Balaji and Sadashivrao had filled it to overflowing. When taunted by Sadashivrao with his extravagance, Raghunathrao bade Sadashivrao take the command and do better, a challenge that Sadashivrao readily accepted and Balaji unwisely approved. Having appointed the general, the Peshwa spared no pains to equip the army. It was the most splendid array that ever followed a Maratha leader. From Poona, Sadashivrao and Vishvasrao set out with Balwantrao Mehendale, Shamsher Bahadur, Naro Shankar, Vithal Shinde, Vinchurkar and Trimbak Purandare, twenty thousand picked cavalry, ten thousand disciplined infantry and a strong corps of artillery under Ibrahim Khan Gardi. At various points along the line of march Malharrao Holkar, Jankoji Sindia, Damaji Gaikwad, Jaswant-rao Power and Govindpant Bandela joined them with strong contingents. The Rajput chiefs sent them irregular horse and Surajmal of Bharatpur met them with thirty thousand Jats. The tents and equipment of the army were of the most splendid kind; for, while Sadashivrao was willing to reprimand his cousin Raghunathrao for his

<sup>1</sup> Tod, *Rajasthan*, vol. II, p. 944.

<sup>2</sup> The name of Vijayasingh is often corrupted to Bijaysing or Bijasing.

reckless expenditure, he was not unwilling to profit by it or to occupy the gorgeous tents and to ride the noble horses, the cost of which had led Raghunathrao into debt. But in spite of its great size and its glorious record, the Maratha army had one fatal weakness. It was suffering from a change in its tactics. It was forsaking the old guerilla tactics that had won the battles of Balaji Vishvanath and his son Bajirao, for new methods copied from the French, which neither the generals nor the soldiers properly understood. Such a situation proved fatal to Soubise's army at Rossbach and to Mackay's army at Killiecrankie, it was soon to prove even more fatal to the grand army of the Marathas.

## CHAPTER XLIII

### PANIPAT AND THE DEATH OF BALAJI PESHWA

SADASHIVRAO, full of self-confidence, led the confederate army to Delhi. On the march Surajmal saw with the eye of an experienced soldier the confusion and disorganization behind the splendid appearance of the Grand Army. He urged Sadashivrao to leave his camp followers and his trained infantry at Bharatpur, and to harass the Afghans in the old Maratha way, until they started to retreat towards their native mountains. During the retreat they could be easily overwhelmed. Surajmal's advice was supported by Malharrao Holkar and the older captains. But Sadashivrao had seen the effect of Ibrahim Khan Gardi's cannon at Udgir and could not believe that against another enemy different tactics might be needed. He slighted Surajmal as a petty zemindar and taunted Holkar with his low birth. No untoward event, however, disturbed the Maratha march before they reached Delhi. The fort was held in the Afghan interest by Yakub Ali Khan. Ghazi-ud-din, on hearing of the Maratha advance, had fled to the camp of Surajmal and disappeared from history. After the battle of Buxar in 1765, he joined Shuja-ud-Daula with a handful of followers. In 1779, he was found at Surat in the garb of a pilgrim and ordered to quit the jurisdiction of the East India Company.

Yakub Ali Khan's force was too small to guard the vast perimeter of the Delhi fort effectively, and a Maratha leader named Vithalrao with five hundred men scaled the walls near the lion bastion and forced his way to the doors of the imperial zenana. Some Afghans rushed up and shot twelve Marathas dead. The remaining Marathas were seized with a panic and threw themselves over the walls. The siege was now begun in regular form. Ibrahim Khan Gardi battered the fort with his cannon for several days; then the supplies of the garrison failed and Yakub Ali Khan offered to evacuate the fort, if allowed to join Ahmad Shah Abdali's camp across the Jamna. His offer was accepted and the Marathas entered in triumph the palace of the Moghul emperors. The city and neighbourhood of Delhi had been exhausted by a succession of plunderers, and Sadashivrao's army soon consumed what remained. Unable to raise cash levies

from the inhabitants, the Maratha general stripped the tomb of Nizam-ud-din of its treasure and ornaments. This saint was the contemporary and intimate friend of Mahomed Tughlak; and his sepulchre is still venerated throughout upper India. The tombs of the emperors were next plundered, and lastly Sadashivrao seized their golden and silver ornaments, the imperial throne and the gold canopy above it. These acts procured for him only seventeen lakhs of rupees, while they caused the greatest scandal among the Rajput and Jat princes. Accustomed as they were to regard the empire, even in its humbled state, with profound veneration, they protested strongly against this insult to fallen majesty. Neither to protests nor entreaties would Sadashivrao pay heed. He had formed the design of declaring Vishvas-rao, on his father Balaji's behalf, the Hindu emperor of India, and he had only postponed its execution at the instance of Malharrao Holkar, until he had defeated Ahmad Shah Abdali and driven him out of India. In the meantime he took a pleasure in degrading the government that he intended to supersede. Surajmal had indeed offered to ransom the Moghul throne and canopy for five lakhs of rupees, but this had only confirmed Sadashivrao in the belief that they were of immense value. Surajmal and his Jat officers, deeply hurt, conferred with the commanders of the Rajput contingents, and one morning Sadashivrao learnt that in the night the Jat and Rajput forces had left his camp and were marching home. Sadashivrao affected indifference. Towards the end of the monsoon he deposed Ghazi-ud-din's nominee, Shah Jahan, and put on the throne Shah Jawan Bakht, the son of the fugitive heir Ali Gohar. He appointed as the emperor's vizier Shuja-ud-Daula, whom he thus hoped to detach from the Afghan cause and with whom he began a prolonged correspondence.

At the same time the town of Kunjpura, some <sup>30</sup>~~sixty~~ miles up the Jamna from Delhi, offered a tempting bait. Kunjpura, being interpreted, means the crane's nest. It had been built by a Najabat Khan, an Afghan soldier of fortune, whom Nadir Shah had in 1739 created nawab of Kunjpura.<sup>1</sup> He now held it with twenty thousand Afghans in the interests of the Abdali, and the latter had stored there a large treasure and a quantity of grain. On hearing of the Maratha advance, the Shah became anxious about its safety, but the Jamna in flood prevented him from relieving the garrison. Sadashivrao had been anxious to plunder Surajmal's lands as a punishment for his desertion;<sup>2</sup> but Holkar and the Sindias pressed on his notice the ungarded state of Kunjpura. On a day pronounced fortunate by the Hindu astrologers, the Maratha army marched against the doomed fortress. The Afghans made a gallant defence; but on October 17, 1760, the Marathas, attacking in three divisions, one led by Sadashivrao, one by Shamsheer Bahadur and one by Ibrahim Khan Gardi, took Kunjpura by storm. The garrison were put to the sword, except two kinsmen of Najabat Khan, who were tortured to reveal the secret treasure-house of Ahmad Shah Abdali. When they had shown to the

<sup>1</sup> *Karnal Gazetteer.*

Marathas fifteen lakhs of rupees, their lives were spared. No other prisoners were taken, Sadashivrao excusing his ferocity on the ground that Najabat Khan had been present at the death of Dattaji Sindia. Indeed, among the spoils of the capture was Javhergaj, the favourite elephant of Jankoji Sindia, which had been taken in the subsequent pursuit. This easy success so increased the pride of the Brahman general, that he and Balwantrao Mehendale taunted Malharrao Holkar with his defeat at Sikandra. The scarred old warrior was deeply incensed and left Sadashivrao's tent, muttering that jackals roared loudly until they had seen the lion.<sup>1</sup>

In the meantime the Abdali had helplessly witnessed the fall of Kunjpura and the massacre of the garrison. A fanatical Musulman, he now regarded the approaching struggle with the Marathas as a holy war, and sent Najib-ud-Daulat to appeal to Shuja-ud-Daula to join his ranks and to fight by his side in the sacred cause of Islam. Although Najib-ud-Daulat was a Sunni and Shuja-ud-Daula a Shia, the latter was won over, and the confederate Musulman and Hindu armies faced each other across the swollen waters of the Jamna river. After the storm of Kunjpura the Marathas camped at Pasina Kalan, some miles to the south and the scene of hard fighting during the civil wars that followed the death of the Emperor Feroz Shah. They seem to have expected Ahmad Shah to try to cross the river higher upstream, but after a brilliant feint he crossed the Jamna at Bhagpat,<sup>2</sup> between the Maratha camp and Delhi. He lost a number of men during the crossing, but, to make the waters abate, he threw into the stream sheets of silver with verses of the Koran engraved on them. His guns he put on rafts or on the backs of elephants. He himself swam his horse across, and by October 25, the whole Afghan army was on the right bank of the Jamna. On October 26, the Maratha vanguard attacked the Afghan outposts, but were repulsed with the loss of twelve hundred men.<sup>1</sup> At this point the weakness in the Maratha high command showed itself. If Sadashivrao intended to fight in the European manner, it was vital to him to keep open his communications with Delhi. If he fought in the old Maratha way, he needed no line of communications, but he could not fight in the old Maratha way so long as he kept with him Ibrahim Khan Gardi's trained artillery and infantry. Malharrao Holkar begged Sadashivrao to stick to Maratha tactics, but that meant the sacrifice of Ibrahim Khan Gardi and his men, and that soldier of fortune threatened to fire on the Maratha army if he was deserted. Sadashivrao rightly refused to sacrifice Ibrahim Khan Gardi, but he did not grasp the difference between the two systems of tactics. Instead of retiring southward past Ahmad Shah's left flank and thus reopening his line of communications, he marched northward towards the town of Panipat, Ahmad Shah following him. In Panipat he fortified himself; while the Afghans established themselves across the Delhi road. From that moment the Maratha army was in the gravest danger.

<sup>1</sup> *Bhauasahib's Bakhar.*<sup>2</sup> *Karnal Gazetteer*, p. 20,

Ahmad Shah was between them and Delhi. The fertile provinces on his right flank were in the hands of his allies, Shuja-ud-Daula and Najib-ud-Daulat. Behind the Marathas was the Punjab held by Afghan governors in Ahmad Shah's interest. For a short time, however, the Maratha army suffered no privations. The tourist who now visits Panipat can gaze from the highest point of the town over an endless succession of wheat-fields irrigated by the Jamna canals. So prosperous, indeed, are the inhabitants that they are accused by their neighbours of unduly wasting their time in pigeon races and quail fights<sup>1</sup>. Even in 1760, it was a thriving town and the Marathas found stores of grain and other supplies, which they promptly requisitioned. Their next care was to fortify themselves. Under Ibrahim Khan's supervision they built an immense ditch fifty feet wide and twelve feet deep, and constructed ramparts to guard the Maratha camp and the town; of this ditch traces are still visible. Opposite the Maratha camp and barring the road to Delhi, Ahmad Shah Abdali fortified himself. Neither side was willing to attack the other, and both sides strove to obtain a superiority in light cavalry actions. It was clear that, so long as the main armies chose to remain stationary, the force whose light cavalry held the command of the open country would starve the other force out. At first the advantage lay with the Marathas. Govindpant Bandela, who was in charge of the Maratha light cavalry, had a marked advantage over the Afghan horse by his superior mobility.

On November 22, Jankoji Sindia, the son of Jayappa Sindia, made a brilliant attack on the Abdali's camp, drove in the outposts, inflicted severe loss on Najib-ud-Daulat's Rohillas, and captured several guns. He returned to Panipat, his war horns sounding a paean of victory. The Abdali moved his camp a considerable distance back and seriously thought of withdrawing altogether. He eventually decided to stay, and on the next new moon, which fell on December 7, 1760, he sent a picked body of Afghans under Najib-ud-Daulat to make an attack on the Maratha centre. Balwantrao Mehendale surprised the Afghans and drove them back with great slaughter. Unhappily in the moment of victory Balwantrao Mehendale fell, shot through the body. His fall caused considerable confusion in the ranks, and a band of Afghans rushed up to cut off his head. His body was saved from mutilation by Khanderao Nimbalkar, but the Marathas withdrew. The Afghans, pursuing their advantage, followed them as far as the great ditch. There they were counter-attacked by both Jankoji Sindia and Malharrao Holkar, and driven back with a loss of three thousand men. Although the Marathas had thus the advantage, Sadashivrao felt deeply the loss of Balwantrao, who was the brother of his first wife Umabai; and the army mourned an officer distinguished in the Carpathic wars. Balwantrao's widow Laxmibai committed sati and was burnt with her husband's body.

On December 22, a far graver calamity befell the Marathas in the death of Govindpant Bandela. This enterprising officer had cut off the

<sup>1</sup> I heard this gossip on the spot when inspecting the battle-field.

Abdali's foraging parties with such skill that there was a famine in the Afghan camp. Both Najib-ud-Daulat and Shuja-ud-Daula pressed the Shah either to fight the Marathas or to retreat across the Jamna. But the Shah, who, although a ferocious barbarian, was yet a great captain, ejected their advice. 'This is,' he said, 'a matter of war with which you are not acquainted. Do you sleep; I will take care that no harm befalls you.' At the same time he rode about fifty or sixty miles a day, constantly visiting his outposts and reconnoitring the enemy. In this way he ascertained the movements of Govindpant Bandela. On December 22, he sent ten thousand Afghans under Atai Khan, the nephew of his vizier, Shah Wali Khan, to surprise the Maratha light cavalry camp. The Afghans reached Govindpant's camp just after sunset and as they approached they displayed striped standards copied from Holkar's. The Marathas, thinking the newcomers friends, let them come close to the camp. The Afghans then made a sudden rush and cut Bandela's force to pieces. Three thousand Marathas lay dead on the field. Many more died in the pursuit. Govindpant Bandela escaped on horseback, but, falling and breaking his leg, was taken prisoner. He was taken to Najib-ud-Daulat, who had him beheaded and his head sent to the Abdali. The Abdali in turn sent it to Sadashivrao.

The destruction of the Maratha light cavalry division was followed by the worst results. The Afghans now obtained command of the open country and drove in the Maratha outposts and stopped all their supplies. The two armies had eaten up the entire countryside and food could be bought in Panipat only at famine rates. A long succession of easy victories had led the Peshwa to allow the officers and soldiers to take their wives with them on field service. With Sadashivrao was his active and daring wife Parvatibai, a daughter of the house of Raste, and Panipat was crowded not only with soldiers and their servants but with thousands of soldiers' wives and maid-servants. The cold, too, became intense. The horses and cattle died in hundreds, reducing the efficiency of the cavalry and poisoning the air of the town. Sadashivrao bore himself with calm courage, yet he clearly saw the increasing danger of his situation. Through his agent Kashirai, a Brahman in Shuja-ud-Daula's camp, he made every effort to secure that general's intervention. But Najib-ud-Daulat would not hear of any treaty with the Marathas. His country had suffered from their raids and he feared their vengeance when the Abdali had departed. The high price of food exhausted the money in Sadashivrao's treasury, so he, the Sindias and Holkar rected mints in the camp and, melting down all the men's and women's gold and silver ornaments, they coined a quantity of rupees, which they stamped with the words 'Bhaushahi', 'Jankoshahi' and 'Malharshahi', but this money lasted for only fifteen days. Sadashivrao organized cavalry patrols to accompany the foragers, and used to offer prizes and rewards for good work; but, as the forage failed, the cavalry horses were too weak to go on escort duty. When the foragers went out without an escort, they were pitilessly massacred by the Afghans.



On January 2, 1761, a determined attempt was made by the son of Govindpant Bandela, Balaji, to convey treasure from Delhi to Panipat. He took with him three hundred horsemen and tied to each horseman a bag containing five hundred rupees. Another body of five hundred horse was sent to protect those who carried the treasure. Unhappily the relief party wandered by mistake into the camp of a strong Afghan patrol. They were instantly attacked and only a few made their way to Panipat. Although the sufferings of the Maratha army were intense, Sadashivrao celebrated on January 10 the *Makar Sankranti* with such pomp and circumstance as he could. Three days later, namely, on January 13,<sup>1</sup> the Maratha leaders begged to be led into action. They were ready, they said, to die on the battlefield, but they could no longer bear to starve in Panipat. Sadashivrao agreed and a council of war was held. Jankoji Sindia and Holkar urged the commander-in-chief to abandon his guns, his followers and his women, and under cover of a feigned attack to escape as best he could to Delhi, where there was a garrison of seven or eight thousand men under the command of Naro Shankar. The other Maratha chiefs supported Sindia and Holkar. Ibrahim Khan Gardi said nothing, and Sadashivrao, assuming his consent from his silence, ordered that all the leaders should make their way as best they could to Delhi and re-form there. After the council of war had broken up, Ibrahim Khan sought an interview with Sadashivrao and, showing him letters received from Najib-ud-Daulat, threatened to desert to the enemy, fire on the Marathas and disclose their plans, unless the previous orders were countermanded and a general engagement ordered with the object of driving the Abdali into the Jamna, which flowed at the back of his camp. Sadashivrao was overcome by the anxieties of his situation and could not bear deserting the Hindu women to be a prey to the Afghan barbarians. He cancelled his previous orders and directed that next day, January 14, the Marathas should make a general assault on the Afghan camp. At the same time he wrote to Kashirai, his agent with Shuja-ud-Daula, 'The cup is now full to the brim, it cannot hold another drop. If anything can be done, do it or answer me plainly at once. Hereafter there will be no time for writing or speaking.' This letter betrayed the Maratha plans, for Kashirai showed it to Shuja-ud-Daula, who at once took it to the Abdali. That evening the food that still remained in his granaries was distributed by Sadashivrao to his army. Next morning his troops, as a sign that they would conquer or die, donned the saffron robe that Rajput warriors put on under such conditions. They had some miles to go, and the Abdali's spies, warned of their approach by Sadashivrao's letter, watched their

<sup>1</sup> The dates are those given by Sardesai. Grant Duff gives the 6th January as the date of Panipat, but the celebration of the *Makar Sankranti* shows the 6th January to be incorrect. The Musulman historians give the date as the 12th. Elliott and Dawson, Vol. VIII, p. 51.

Indeed Sardesai must be correct; for in a letter written by Anupgir Gosain to Balaji Peshwa (Parasnisi Collection) he gives the Hindu date of the battle of Panipat as *Budhwar Paus Sud Ashtami*, which corresponds to Wednesday, the 14th January.

movements all the way. Neither side made effective use of its artillery. Ibrahim Khan opened the action on the left wing, where he commanded, by attacking together with Damaji Gaikwad the main body of Rohillas under Ahmad Khan Bangash that formed the Afghan right wing. The Abdali's centre was formed by the Afghan army under Shah Wali Khan, the vizier. On his left were Shuja-ud-Daula with the Oudh troops and another body of Rohillas under Najib-ud-Daula. A picked body of Afghans under Shah Pasand Khan held the post of danger on the extreme left of the Afghan line and barred the route to Delhi. In the Maratha centre were Sadashivrao and Jaswantrao Powar and their right wing was formed by the Sindia and Holkar contingents. Everything that could inspire the soldiers of the two armies was present on that day. The Musulmans remembered with pride that on that very field the lion-hearted Babar had won the empire of India. There, too, the great Akbar, when only a boy of fourteen, had defeated Hemo and had seen his Hindu rival thrown mortally wounded at his feet. On the other hand the great plain was full of memoirs of epic India. It was at the village of Basthal (*Vyas sthal*) that the sage Vyas had lived and dictated to the god Ganpati the myriad lines of the Mahabharata. It was at Gondar that Gautama-rishi, to punish them for seeking to rob him of his bride Ahalyabai, had sent a thousand sores to torment the god Indra and had darkened for ever with his curses the till then unsullied beauty of the moon Panipat, the town in which the Marathas had lived for two months, Sonpat, a village visible from its walls, and Bhagpat, the spot where the Abdali had forced his way across the Jamna, were three of the five villages which Yudhisthira, rather than plunge all Bharatvarsha into warfare, had asked for as a meagre fief for himself and his four brothers. To the north stretched the field where, to settle the claims of the sons of Pandu and Dritarashtra, the chivalry of India had fallen almost to a man in the slaughter of Kurukshetra. There the generous Karna had died at the hands of his brother Arjuna the archer. There Bhishma had lain on his bed of arrows while the contending chiefs guarded him from wild beasts and listened reverently to the wisdom of his lips. It was in the Parasir tank at Balapur that the brave but wicked Duryodhana had hidden from the wrath of Bhima; and it was at the Phalgu tank at Bharat that the Pandavas had celebrated the funeral rites of the warriors who had fallen in the most terrible of all Indian wars. Nor were the prizes that hung before the eyes of the opposing leaders less brilliant than those that dazzled the eyes of Duryodhana and Yudhisthira. The Musulman armies fought to retain the last shreds of the Delhi empire that had once stretched from the snow mountains of the north to the southern seas round Rameshwaram. The Hindu warriors fought to throw off now and for ever the foreign yoke that had pressed on them since the fall of Rai Pithora, and to seat once again a Hindu prince on the throne of Dushyanta and Dasharatha, of Bharata and Ramchandra.

Ibrahim Khan Gardi had said to Sadashivrao before the battle joined that, although the latter had often complained because of his insistence on regular pay for his troops, they would now prove on the

battle-field that they were worth it. This promise he nobly fulfilled. Charging the Rohillas with the bayonet, his disciplined troops destroyed their formation, killing and wounding eight thousand of them. This brilliant action laid bare Shah Vali Khan's right flank, and Sadashivrao charged the Afghan centre with the flower of the Maratha army. The Maratha cavalry broke up the enemy's centre and it seemed as if the day was lost for the Afghans. Ahmad Shah, however, had in hand a reserve of ten thousand heavy cavalry and these he now sent against the Maratha left wing. Ibrahim Khan Gardi had turned back his left flank to meet such a manoeuvre; but in the fighting the left flank had moved forward, and Ibrahim Khan, severely wounded, was in no state to restore the formation. At the critical moment a bullet struck Vishvasrao in the forehead and he died at once. To Vishvasrao Sadashivrao was deeply attached. The boy had inherited his grandfather's looks, which had been famous throughout India, and at this time he was one of the comeliest of the children of men. Sadashivrao had trained Vishvasrao himself and had been his constant guardian and companion in the Carnatic wars. The boy had returned his uncle's affection and seems to have loved him more deeply than even his own father. The sight of the gallant youth dead beside him in the same howdah was too much for a mind oppressed by the unceasing labours and anxieties of the preceding three months. He said to his wife Parvatibai that he could never again face his cousin, and, leaving her in the howdah, he mounted his favourite charger, a splendid Arab stallion. He sent a message to Malharrao Holkar, telling him to do as he had directed. His message conveyed, as it was probably meant to convey, the meaning to Holkar that he should revert to the earlier plan of battle and cut his way through to Delhi. Holkar rode off the field as fast as he could. Damaji Gaikwad followed. A body of Afghans got in among the camp followers and cut them up. A sudden panic spread through both wings. The centre still stood firm where Sadashivrao was fighting. He disappeared in the mêlée,<sup>1</sup> shot through the side, and then the centre broke too. Except the Holkar contingent, which followed their leader to Delhi, the routed army took the wrong direction and rushed back to Panipat, the spot which they had that morning meant to leave for ever. Behind them followed the Afghans, cutting them down by thousands. Great numbers crushed each other to death, trying to scale the high fortifications which they had built to check the Afghans. The survivors crowded into Panipat, round which the Afghans placed an investing force. Next morning the Afghans entered the town without opposition and made all inside prisoners. They took the men outside the town, ranged them in rows, gave each one a few grains of parched corn and a drink of water, and then slashed off their heads, which they piled in heaps. The women they reduced to slavery, regardless of their birth or rank. In this way many hundreds of high-born southern women disappeared and were never heard of again. Jankoji Sindia, who had been held to ransom

<sup>1</sup> The spot where Sadashivrao was last seen is marked by a monument erected by the Punjab Government.

by an Afghan, was killed in cold blood, and the gallant Ibrahim Khan Gardi, who had fallen wounded into the hands of Shuja-ud-Daula, was demanded by the Abdali and treated so evilly that he soon died. Naro Shankar,<sup>1</sup> who had some seven or eight thousand men at Delhi, on hearing the news of the disaster, should have done his best to cover the retreat of the remnants of the army. Unfortunately, although an officer of high reputation, he seems completely to have lost his head. On January 15, he fled from Delhi with such precipitation that he left behind some forty lakhs of treasure. Naro Shankar's flight added to the sufferings of the Marathas. The stragglers who escaped from Panipat had no place of refuge. When they wandered starving to Delhi, they were robbed by the mob. When they fled across country they were attacked by the peasantry and slaughtered. Others were stripped, robbed of their horses and plundered by the stalwart northern women, and sent to find their way naked, penniless and on foot to the Deccan. Malharrao Holkar made his way to Mathura and thence to Bharatpur, where he was hospitably received by Surajmal. In time some three to four thousand fugitives, including Shamsheer Bahadur, reached the Jat country. There Shamsheer Bahadur died of his wounds at Dig. The rest were hospitably entertained by Surajmal for eight days and given money to take them home.<sup>2</sup> Damaji Gaikwad and Naro Shankar reached Baroda and the Deccan in safety. Parvatibai, Sadashivrao's wife, and Laxmibai, the wife of Vishvasrao, were taken to Gwalior by Janu Bhirtade.

The corpse of Vishvasrao was easily found and was sent for by Ahmad Shah. The Afghans crowded round it and wished to have it stuffed with straw and sent to Kabul. This inhuman proposal did not commend itself to the Abdali. Eventually Umrao<sup>3</sup> Gosavi, a noble in the train of Shuja-ud-Daula, ransomed the bodies of Vishvasrao, of Tukoji Sinda, a full brother of Madhavrao, and of Santaji Wagh and Jaswantrao Powar for three lakhs of rupees and had them cremated according to the Hindu ritual. For the body of Sadashivrao religious mendicants, sent for the purpose by Trimbakrao Purandare, searched long in vain. At last Ganesh Pandit saw beneath a heap of dead a corpse on which were some precious jewels. The head had been cut off, but some scars on the feet and back enabled Ganesh Pandit and the men with him to identify the body as Sadashivrao's. Thereupon Kashirai, Sadashivrao's agent with Shuja-ud-Daula, obtained leave from the Abdali to cremate it.

Sadashivrao was greatly gifted by nature. He was an admirable financier, an able administrator and within certain limits a competent general. It was his country's misfortune that, after easy successes against the Nizam's armies, he was pitted against the warlike high-

<sup>1</sup> Naro Shankar's family name was Dani. He was a Deshasth Brahman and the first *subhedar* of Jhansi, which he founded. He was given the title of Raja Bahadur by the emperor, and is known in the chronicles as Raja Bahadur of Malegaon.

<sup>2</sup> Surajmal is said to have spent ten lakhs in helping the Marathas. Sardesai, *Panipat*, p. 205.

landers of Afghanistan, led by a skilful and experienced captain. His judgment was disturbed by the new tactics introduced by the French, and he neither grasped their limitations nor understood their advantages. He rejected Holkar's advice, but for this there was some excuse, as only shortly before both Dattaji Sindia and Holkar had been well beaten while following the tactics the latter advocated. The worst fault that can be ascribed to Sadashivrao is that on the day of battle he allowed his sorrow for Vishvasrao to overcome his sense of duty as a general. Had he not abandoned his elephant to fight as a common trooper, he could, if he had not won the day, at any rate have saved the army. A skilful retirement on Delhi would have enabled him to re-form and again to hazard the fortunes of battle. By acting as he did, he left the Marathas without a commander either to direct the retreat or to compel Damaji Gaikwad and Malharrao Holkar to share with their comrades the full burden of the day. Sadashivrao must also be blamed for postponing a general action until hunger had wasted the number and strength of both men and horses. He had, it is true, sent for reinforcements to the Deccan, but his messages fell into the hands of the Abdali and his letters were destroyed. He waited too long, he should at once on the death of Govindpant Bandela, either have fought an action or retired on Delhi. It is, however, impossible not to praise as well as blame. As the anxieties and the dangers of the siege grew, so grew his serene fortitude. Aware, better than anyone else, of the gravity of the situation, he hid his fears with a resolution so stern that the Abdali's spies never reported to their master the real misery of the Maratha camp. If he committed mistakes, he at least feared not to face certain death, and our censure of the general's errors must be softened by our admiration for his endurance in adversity and his physical courage in disaster.

Most of the letters sent by Sadashivrao and Vishvasrao to the Peshwa had miscarried. Nevertheless sufficient news came through to warn Balaji to send help to Sadashivrao. Unhappily he was engaged in the arrangements of his second marriage,<sup>1</sup> which, much to his first wife Gopikabar's disgust, was celebrated early in December 1760. This delayed the Peshwa; but after the wedding he moved northward as fast as he could. When he reached the Narbada, a letter was brought him by a banker. It contained the words, 'Two pearls have been dissolved, twenty-seven gold mohurs have been lost, and of the silver and copper the total cannot be cast up'. From this the unhappy prince learnt the fate of his cousin, his son and his army. It was not long before the fugitives confirmed the news. The Peshwa showed his displeasure to those leaders who had escaped the slaughter. He censured Vinchurkar and Powar, and he attached Malharrao Holkar's *jaghire*, which remained under attachment until after Malharrao's death. Unhappily Balaji was suffering from consumption, and the shock added to the disease soon killed him. He returned to Poona,<sup>2</sup> stopping on May 16 to perform on the banks of the Godavari the *shradh*, or anniversary ceremonies, of his father Bajirao. He

<sup>1</sup> Sardesai, *Panjab*, p. 235.

reached Poona early in June, and built the first bridge across the Muta to bear the name of Lakdi Phul,<sup>1</sup> or wooden bridge. On June 18, he went to his house on Parvati Hill. There his mind began to fail and he became thinner daily. In a few days, although barely forty years old, he died in the arms of his brother Raghunathrao.

English historians have dealt scant justice to this eminent prince. And yet they of all others should have been generous to him, for, by helping to destroy Tulaji Angre and by paralysing de Bussy in the Deccan and so giving Clive a free hand in Bengal, Balaji did the English the best turn ever done them by a foreigner. Without the real greatness of Bajirao, Balaji was a wise and far-sighted politician. He met with rare skill and firmness the crisis caused by Tarabai's intrigues and Damaji's rebellion. He reduced to a shadow the power of the Nizam and, but for Panipat, would have added the whole of southern India to the Maratha kingdom. Occupied in the south, he never found time, while Peshwa, to go to Delhi. Had he done so, he would better have understood the Afghan menace. Balaji's name was long cherished by the Maratha peasants for his success in improving the revenue system and the administration of justice. In the former he was aided by Sadashivrao, in the latter his chief associate was Balshastrī Gadgil. Balaji was an untiring letter-writer and no less than fifteen hundred of his letters have survived. In every campaign he sent to Poona a continuous stream of epistles, which show his unremitting zeal in the public service. In 1750 he founded in Poona an institution for the training of revenue clerks and officers. He made great efforts to improve the food and the transport of the army, and unquestionably equipped it and cared for it better than any Maratha ruler since the days of the great king. For one innovation, however, he must be blamed. He allowed, even encouraged, officers and soldiers to take with them on active service their wives and families.

Of all his cities Balaji loved Poona best. He spent vast sums in attracting to it learned scholars, devout Brahmans and famous poets. He encouraged trade, built fountains, improved roads, and created fresh *peths*, or quarters. To one he gave the name of his cousin, to another he gave the name of his youngest son; and Sadashivpeth and Narayanpeth are still populous and fashionable. He greatly improved the lake at Katraj and planted innumerable trees on the roads to Theur, Alandi and Ganeshkhind. But the monument that to-day most vividly recalls to the visitor's mind this magnificent prince, is Parvati Hill. Before Balaji's time a tiny temple to Parvati crowned its summit and the shrine had acquired the reputation of curing sick people. Once Gopikabai, suffering from a sore heel,<sup>2</sup> went to see the hill goddess and was cured. Her husband, to show his gratitude, erected the noble temple now known as Devadeveshwar. After Shahu's death Balaji

<sup>1</sup> There is still a Lakdi Phul to the west of Poona City, but it is entirely of stone. The Peshwa's family were short-lived. Sadashivrao was 31 when he was killed. Chimuaji Appa died at 42; Madhavrao I at 27; Bajirao I at 43; Raghunathrao at 49; Balaji Vishvanath, however, lived to the age of 76 and Bajirao II to the age of 80.

placed in it Shahu's *padukas*, or sandals, and thus the hill became a monument of the Maratha king. In the plain to the south the Peshwa gave great feasts and distributed charity; while to the north he built a beautiful lake that for many years was one of the chief glories of Poona. Not only did Balaji honour the god Shiva's queen, he built also a temple on Parvati Hill to the god Vishnu, and on the eleventh of every Hindu month he went regularly to worship at Vishnu's shrine. Indeed, he so loved the hill that he built a palace there; and when he felt death coming near, it was to Parvati Hill that he went to die. Nor has the Peshwa's choice been disapproved by later generations. A constant stream of visitors still go up and down the stone steps that lead to the summit of Parvati. Thence can be seen, like a map unrolled, Poona City, her sister rivers the Muta and the Mula, the shrine of Alandi, and the silver thread of Tukaram's Indrayani, while far away to the west the dark hill forts of the Sahyadris recall the days when Maratha armies rode forth to Delhi, and the fame of Balaji the Peshwa resounded from the Indus river to the southern seas.

## CHAPTER XLIV

### THE ACCESSION OF MADHAVRAO BALLAL

THE disaster of Panipat and the death of the Peshwa were followed by a series of plots and disturbances. Tulaji Angre, although in prison, contrived to communicate with a nephew of Ibrahim Khan Gardi and to plot a rising on the day of the Peshwa's death. Some eight thousand disciplined infantry entered Poona unperceived; but at the last moment a letter from Angre was betrayed into Raghunathrao's hands. He acted with energy, disarmed the conspirators and confined Tulaji Angre with greater strictness than ever.

Although the unfortunate Ramraja had for ten years taken no part in the government, such was his prestige as the descendant of the great king, that it was felt necessary to obtain his investiture for the new Peshwa. As Vishvasrao was dead, the next heir was Balaji's second son Madhavrao, known in history as Madhavrao Ballal. He was then sixteen years old, and Nature had bestowed on him a ripe judgment, a high spirit and the talents both of a soldier and a statesman. His uncle Raghunathrao had hoped to conduct the administration in Madhavrao's name until his nephew reached man's estate. In this ambition he was aided and abetted by two persons, his wife Anandibai and his friend Sakharam Bapu. Anandibai was a beautiful but wicked woman, whom Raghunathrao had married in 1755, on the death of his first wife Jankibai. Raghunathrao remained all his life deeply in love with her and still more deeply in fear of her. Sakharam Bapu's real name was Sakharam Bhagwant Bokil and he was Kulkarni of Hivare; he was descended from Pantoji Gopinath, who had helped Shivaji to defeat Afzul Khan at Pratapgad. Madhavrao, although conscious of great powers, at first acquiesced in his uncle's self-formed regency. Indeed, the affairs of the state



MADHAVRAO PESHWA





were in the greatest disorder. There was little or no danger, it is true, from the north. For the Musulman confederates had no sooner won Panipat, than they began to quarrel among themselves. Ahmad Shah Abdali had taken in his victory all Ibrahim Khan Gardi's artillery, five hundred elephants, five thousand horses and twenty thousand bullocks; but of treasure he captured little or none. The result was that when he reached Delhi, which he did on January 21, 1761, and proposed to his Afghans that he should crown himself emperor, they broke into a formidable mutiny. They demanded their arrears of pay, which had accumulated during the previous two years. He contrived to appease them for a time by a forced loan of forty lakhs from Najib-ud-Daulat. But thereafter he confined his ambitions to the provinces of Sind and the Punjab. He acknowledged the fugitive prince Ali Gohar as emperor with the title of Shah Alam, or Sovereign of the Known World, appointed Shuja-ud-Daula, who had gone back to Oudh, vizier of the empire, and entrusted Delhi and the royal family to the care of Najib-ud-Daulat. On March 22, 1761, he struck his camp and returned to Afghanistan.

But, if there was no fear from the conquerors of Panipat, the gravest danger threatened from the east. Nizam Ali, who had usurped from his brother Salabat Jang the entire administration of the Moghul Deccan, prepared to take full advantage of the situation. In his design he was favoured by Tarabai, who openly rejoiced in the misfortunes of Balaji and the deaths of Sadashivrao and Vishvasrao. The Maratha chiefs were at variance with the Brahmins, and the Brahmins from above the Ghats sided with the Marathas against the Brahmins of the Konkan. Nizam Ali marched with all speed towards Poona, destroying and despoiling, as he did so, the Hindu temples in his line of march. This conduct, as well as the judicious offer of the post of *senapati* or commander-in-chief in the Maratha service, induced Ramchandra Jadhav to leave Nizam Ali and to join his own countrymen. In spite of this desertion, Nizam Ali pressed on as far as Urali, a few miles from Poona, demanding as the price of peace the cancellation of the cessions made after the battle of Udgir. After continuous fighting from November 11, 1761, to January 8, 1762, the Nizam was glad to confirm the treaty of Udgir and return to his own dominions.<sup>1</sup>

In the course of the year 1762 Madhavrao determined to assert his rights. He was now seventeen and in every way fitted to conduct successfully the administration. Early in the year he had been as far as Sira, in command of a Maratha force, to collect the southern tribute. With him had gone Trimbakrao Vishvanath Pethe, the maternal uncle of Sadashivrao, affectionately known to all as Trimbakrao Mama, Baburao Phadnis and Gopalrao Govind Patwardhan, and

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff, Vol. 1, p. 5, says that Raghunathrao relinquished twenty-seven lakhs of rupees out of the sixty-two lakhs granted by the treaty of Udgir; but the *Bakhars* do not support him. Mr. Sardesai in his article on Madhavrao in the July number of the *Vivadhan Vistar* says that Raghunathrao granted nothing. This seems the more likely in view of the precarious state to which the Moghuls had been reduced.

they had urged him to beware of his aspiring uncle. Madhavrao now demanded a fuller share in the government. Raghunathrao at first scorned and, afterwards resented, the demand. On the advice of Sakharam Bapu he resigned his office as regent, and Sakharam resigned his as *diwan*, confident that without them Madhavrao would be helpless to govern. But they entirely misjudged the spirit of the young prince. He at once assumed the supreme control of the government in place of his uncle, gave the vacant office of *diwan* to Trimbakrao Pethe, and appointed Hari Ballal Phadke and Balaji Janardhan Bhanu as his private secretaries. Balaji Janardhan Bhanu is better known in history as Nana Phadnavis. According to the *Peshwa's Bakhār*, his grandfather Balaji and his great uncle lived at Velas in the Konkan, and gave shelter to Balaji Vishvanath when he fled from the wrath of the Sidis. Afterwards the brothers went with Balaji Vishvanath to Shahu's court. It is, in any case, certain that for three generations his family had held high office, and he had himself been brought up in the companionship both of Vishvasrao and of Madhavrao. Although only nineteen, he had seen considerable fighting and had been on field service both in the Carnatic and Hindustan. He had taken his mother north, as she wished to make a pilgrimage to Mathura, and in this way both had been caught up in Sadashivrao's army. Nana Phadnavis escaped from Panipat but lost his mother there. He made every effort to recover her, meaning to take her back if pure, or to drown her, according to the stern Brahman creed, in the Ganges if defiled. At last he learnt from her servant that she had been killed by a fall from her horse, as she strove to escape from the mad stream of fugitives that raced back to Panipat. Hari Ballal Phadke was about the same age as Nana Phadnavis. He was the son of a poor Brahman called Balambhat Phadke, a priest in the household of Baburao Bhanu, Nana's uncle. Nana and Hari had been close friends from childhood and this friendship lasted all their lives. Besides Nana Phadnavis and Hari Phadke, Madhavrao appointed Ramshastrī Prabhunc, of Mahuli near Satara, head of his judicial department. Ramshastrī's<sup>1</sup> name is still remembered as a model of learning, uprightness and equity. Lastly, Gopalrao Govind Patwardhan promised his full support to the new administration. Raghunathrao had retired to Nasik on the Godavari and was hiding his wrath by the devoutness of his worship in the temple of Kapileshwar. That temple is the only known shrine of Shiva where no stone image of the bull Nandikeshwar will be found seated opposite the mystic sign of the godhead. The bull's absence is explained by a whimsical and charming story. On one occasion the goddess Parvati, it is said, put her hands over her husband Shiva's eyes, but the great god was in no humour for fun. He opened his third eye and with it burnt up the sun, the earth, and last, but not least, the god Brahmadeva's fifth head. When Shiva had recovered his temper, he restored the sun and the earth, but he was not able to restore the fifth head of Brahmadeva. As a punishment for burning off another god's

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head, he was condemned always to see it dancing before his eyes. The punishment was a very severe one and, to rid himself of the vision, Shiva wandered all over India, visiting in vain shrine after shrine. At last he came to the banks of the Godavari, and sat down to rest under a tree. As he sat, he overheard a conversation between a young bull and a staid old cow, its mother. 'To-morrow,' said the old cow, 'your master will put a ring through your nose and, yoking you to a plough, will make you work for the rest of your life.' The young bull answered scornfully that, if its master acted so, it would gore him to death. The mother remonstrated that the master was a Brahman. 'Never mind,' said the young bull, 'I know how to purify myself even from the deadly sin of Brahman-murder.' The god Shiva was deeply interested. He thought to himself that, if the bull could purify itself from Brahman-murder, (Shiva) could, by doing what it did, purify himself from the sin of having burnt off one of Brahmadeva's five heads. He went away, but next morning returned to the spot where he had heard the conversation. In a little time the Brahman came and tried to fasten the ring in the young bull's nose. The graceless beast threw him on his back and gored him to death. From being pure white, it became black with sin. Galloping off with its tail in the air, it plunged into the pool in the Godavari river where the divine hero Ramchandra had performed the obsequies of his dead father. Such was the holiness of the water that the bull became pure white, save only the tip of its tail. This it had held in the air to show its defiant spirit. The god Shiva watched the incident closely and immediately afterwards plunged into the same pool. The same moment the vision that had haunted him disappeared. To commemorate the punishment and the release of the god Shiva there was built close to the place where these events occurred the temple of Kapileshwar, or the God of the Head. It is the only temple in India, as I have said, where no bull kneels reverently in front of the god. For whereas in other spots the bull is regarded as Shiva's servant, there the bull is regarded as the great god's teacher.

The charm of this delightful legend was, it is to be feared, lost on the Maratha Achilles as he sulked on the banks of the Godavari. Less fortunate than his prototype, he found that his absence produced none of the calamities that he had anticipated. Sakharam Bapu was deeply hurt at his supersession by Trimbakrao Pethe. Lastly, the beautiful and ambitious Anandibai resented her husband's descent from the regency to private life. Yielding to his anger and the counsels of his friend and his wife, Raghunathrao sought the help of the Nizam against his own nephew. Leaving Nasik, he went to Aurangabad, where the governor, Murad Khan, received him in state and gave him a large contingent of Moghul troops. A treaty known as the treaty of Pedgaon was entered into between Raghunathrao and Nizam Ali, who in 1761 had deposed his brother Salabat Jang<sup>1</sup> and was now Nizam of Hyderabad. The price of Moghul help was the reduction by fifty-one lakhs annually of the cessions made by the treaty of Udgir, and the

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surrender of Daulatabad, Shivner, Ahmadnagar and Asirgad. Many Maratha chiefs, including Janoji Bhosle, despised Madhavrao as a child and supported Raghunathrao. Madhavrao equipped such forces as he could, and the two armies fought on the banks of the Ghodnadi river a series of actions between November 7 and 12, 1762. At last Madhavrao, despairing of successful resistance, went unattended to his uncle's camp and gave himself into his uncle's power, rather than continue a quarrel profitable to his country's enemies. To do Raghunathrao justice, he took no unfair advantage of his nephew's act. He put him under surveillance, but treated him with every courtesy. He made no effort to depose him, but took over the administration in Madhavrao's name, giving out that his young nephew had been misled by the advice of interested intrigues. He displeased Trimbakrao Pethe and restored Sakharam Bapu. With him he associated Balwantrao Mahadev Purandare, to whom he gave back the great fort of Purandar. He degraded Nana Phadnavis' cousin Moroba from the family office of the Peshwa's *phadnavis*, or chief secretary, and gave it to Chinto Vithal Rairkar. He attached the estate of Bhavanrao (also known as Shrinivas) Pratinidhi, who had succeeded his uncle Jagjivan, and gave it to Naro Shankar Dani, who had disgraced himself at Delhi, to manage for his own infant son Bhaskarrao, born to him and Anandibai on February 26, 1762. Lastly, he took Miraj by storm from Gopalrao Govind Patwardhan and confiscated his entire estate.

The evil example set by Raghunathrao was now followed by his opponents. The Nizam's diwan was at this time a singularly astute individual named Vithal Sundar Raje Pratapwant, a Yajurvedi Deshasthi Brahman.<sup>1</sup> He invited all the discontented Maratha leaders to join Nizam Ali, and Gopalrao Patwardhan, Bhavanrao Pratinidhi, the Nimbalkars, Moroba Phadnavis and his father Baburao, Janoji Bhosle and a host of others accepted the invitation. Indeed, of all the recent adherents of Madhavrao, only Nana Phadnavis and Hari Phadke remained loyal to their country. With this formidable accession of strength, the Nizam believed himself capable of overthrowing the Maratha state. He denounced the treaties of Udgir and Pedgaon, and proclaimed his intention of removing from the regency the Chitpavan Bhats and substituting for them Janoji Bhosle of Nagpur. The kingdom of Shivaji would then once more be in the hands of a Bhosle. The Nizam would have been better advised had he declared himself the champion of Madhavrao; for, by threatening the removal of the Chitpavan Bhats, he drove Madhavrao into his uncle's arms, who then had the help of his nephew's clear and resolute mind. Raghunathrao had also the experienced aid of Damaji Gaikwad and Malharrao Holkar, and at their advice he opposed to the invasion the old Maratha tactics. Evading a general action, he slipped past Nizam Ali and besieged Aurangabad. Failing to take it, he led

<sup>1</sup> He was one of the 3½ wise men of the Deccan. Sakharam Bapu was another and Divaji Pant was the third. Nana Phadnavis was the half. It was a case where the half proved greater than the whole.

his army into Berar, where they plundered the estates of Janoji Bhosle. From Berar they roamed up and down, laying waste the Moghul territories and extorting contributions of grain and money. Nizam Ali at first pursued them in vain. He then changed his tactics and marched straight for Poona, while Raghunathrao, in turn, marched against Hyderabad. The threat did not divert the Nizam from his goal. He marched unopposed to the Maratha capital, whose inhabitants fled panic-stricken to Sinhgad. Camping outside Poona, he allowed his army to plunder it, and pulled down or burnt every house not ransomed by its owner. He then marched eastward, devastating the country between Purandar fort and the Bhima river. In the meantime Raghunathrao had reached Hyderabad, but had made no impression on its fortifications. After levying two lakhs from its suburbs, he followed Sakharam Bapu's advice and entrusted to that statesman the task of winning back to their duty the Maratha officers in the Nizam's army. Sakharam Bapu was first successful with Janoji Bhosle, to whom he disclosed the treachery of Nizam Ali. The latter, while Vithal Sundar had promised the regency to Janoji Bhosle, had himself offered it secretly to the raja of Kolhapur.

Instead of a doubtful chance of the regency, Sakharam Bapu offered Janoji Bhosle an estate worth thirty-two lakhs a year out of the territory ceded after Udgir. Janoji, in turn, corrupted the other Maratha leaders with the Nizam and they agreed to desert on the first favourable opportunity. Elated by the success of Sakharam Bapu's negotiations, Raghunathrao hung on the flank of the Nizam's army as he retired to Aurangabad, where he proposed to pass the monsoon. On reaching a spot called Rakshasabhavan, or Demon Land, on the banks of the Godavari then in flood, Nizam Ali crossed with half his army, leaving his diwan on the other bank with a considerable force, including a chosen body of seven thousand Afghans and all the Maratha contingents. At this point Janoji Bhosle, whose troops were in arrears, picked a quarrel with Vithal Sundar and withdrew. The other Maratha leaders pleaded the monsoon as a ground for returning to their fiefs. These desertions were the signal awaited by Raghunathrao. On August 10, 1763, he attacked Vithal Sundar's isolated force with the utmost fury. The Afghan troops defended themselves bravely, and Vithal Sundar's leadership so inspired his men that they repulsed the attack and surrounded Raghunathrao and his favourite officer, a Prabhu called Sakharam Hari Gupte, who were seated on the same elephant. In the rear of the Maratha army was Madhavrao in nominal command, but really the prisoner, of fifteen hundred household troops. At this point the day seemed lost and the battle of Rakshasabhavan a mere repetition of Panipat. Malharrao Holkar, whose corps was in flight, came up to Madhavrao, who asked his advice. 'Come with me to Poona,' was the reply, 'there a throne awaits you.' The old soldier little guessed the heroic spirit that flamed within the breast of the young Peshwa. Turning furiously on Holkar, he said in a white heat of passion, 'They spoke the truth then, who said that you were the cause of Sadashivrao's defeat and death at Panipat.' Calling on his fifteen hundred men to



follow him, and rallying every fugitive he met, the boy-prince charged Vithal Sundar's Afghans advancing in the disorder of victory. Fortune instantly changed sides. The household troops cut their way to Raghunathrao's elephant and he once more took command of the army. Vithal Sundar, trying to re-form his men, fell shot through the chest. Nizam Ali tried to re-cross the Godavari, but in vain; and half his army, a moment before victorious, was slain, driven in headlong flight, or drowned in the flood of the swollen river. Nizam Ali withdrew to Aurangabad, which Raghunathrao tried unsuccessfully to storm, and then besieged. Nizam Ali was in grave peril. At any moment a conspiracy might free his elder brother Salabat Jang and restore him to the throne. He therefore took the step of visiting Raghunathrao in person, imploring his pardon and throwing the blame of his late errors on the unfortunate Vithal Sundar. Raghunathrao, save when under his wife's influence, was the simplest and best-natured of men. He was completely deceived by the feigned penitence of Nizam Ali, forgave him everything and was still willing to give him the lands ceded by the treaty of Pedgaon. Of these, however, lands yielding thirty-two lakhs had been assigned to Janoji Bhosle, so that only land yielding nineteen lakhs remained in Raghunathrao's gift. These he gave, but afterwards he was induced by his own advisers to limit the grant to one of only ten lakhs.<sup>1</sup>

The claims of Madhavrao, whose gallantry had changed the battle of Rakshasabhavan from a defeat into a victory, could no longer be ignored. Raghunathrao, genuinely grateful, freed his nephew from surveillance and accorded him a large share of power. Madhavrao's first step was to correct the errors that had estranged so many Marathas from the Peshwa's cause. He restored Miraj to Gopalrao Patwardhan and, on Bhaskarrao's death later in the year, the office of *Pratimudi* to Bhavanrao. The post of *phadnavis* was not given back to Moroba, but it was bestowed on Nana Phadnavis, his undivided cousin. As head of the state, it fell to Madhavrao to bestow on Janoji Bhosle the title-deeds for thirty-five lakhs' worth of territory. As he did so, he openly and vehemently upbraided the recreant Maratha, and condemned in the harshest terms the recent treacheries of Bhosle and his accomplices. Having thus in no uncertain way inaugurated his accession to power, he proceeded to exercise it with a genius and vigour that placed him in the affections of his countrymen only second to the great king himself.

## CHAPTER XLV

### MADHAVRAO'S FIRST AND SECOND MYSORE WARS, AND SECOND CIVIL WAR

WHILE the Maratha power had been reduced by the defeat of Panipat, the war with Nizam Ali and internal dissensions, Haidar Ali's power had grown in the most extraordinary manner. We have seen how in

<sup>1</sup> This is known as the treaty of Aurangabad.

1760 he returned to Seringapatam after the not unsuccessful contest with Gopalrao Govind Patwardhan. After his return the young raja, Chikka Krishnaraja of Mysore, and his mother sought to use Haidar Ali to displace Nandiraja, the all-powerful *Dalwai*. This difficult task Haidar Ali, aided by an able Deccan Brahman called Khanderao, successfully accomplished. But, having seized the power, he declined to relinquish it and kept the raja as dependent as before. The king and his mother then won over Khanderao, who allied himself with Visaji Krishna Biniwala (commonly known as Visaji Pandit), the commander of the Maratha troops in the fourteen districts. But in 1761, the disaster of Panipat led to Visaji Pandit's recall, and thereafter Haidar Ali, by a combination of trickery and military skill probably never equalled, overcame Khanderao<sup>1</sup> and, confining him in a cage, became sole master of the Mysore kingdom. Subsequently he seized Bednur and, in consideration of a payment of three lakhs, induced Basalat Jang, the brother of Salabat Jang, to confer on him the nawabship of Sira, which had become a Maratha dependency. In 1762, Haidar Ali on the strength of this grant drove the Maratha garrison out and installed himself as nawab of Sira with the title of Haidar Ali Khan Bahadur. He had also tried to win to his alliance the nawab of Savanur. On the latter's refusal to break his treaty with the Marathas, Haidar Ali laid waste his lands and drove the Maratha garrison from Dharwar. In the end Haidar Ali's lieutenant, Fazl Ali Khan, extended his frontier as far as the Kistna river. These continual insults to the Maratha flag forced Madhavrao to make his first campaign in the Carnatic.

Madhavrao ordered Gopalrao Patwardhan, whose frontier as chief of Miraj extended to the northern bank of the Kistna river, to check Fazl Ali Khan's advance, and for this purpose sent him a strong reinforcement from Poona. Patwardhan's army was superior to Fazl Ali Khan's in numbers, although not in quality, and in April 1764 he was tempted to engage Fazl Ali Khan in a general action before the arrival of the Peshwa, and was severely defeated. Madhavrao had been delayed by Raghunathrao's insistent claim to command the army. This claim Madhavrao with the utmost courtesy heard and rejected. In this difference Sakharam Bapu supported the nephew against the uncle, and Raghunathrao, overruled, again left Poona in disgust and went back to Nasik. Madhavrao was now free to lead the army of the Carnatic. Early in May 1764, the gallant young Peshwa with thirty to forty thousand horse, an equal number of infantry and a great train

<sup>1</sup> Khanderao proved Haidar Ali's equal in the field, but he was overcome by a strategy worthy of Aurangzeb. Haidar Ali first won over to his cause Nandiraja, the displaced minister, and then fabricated letters in Nandiraja's name to Khanderao's officers, desiring them to surrender Khanderao in accordance with the pre-arranged agreement. The bearer of these letters let himself be caught. When Khanderao read the letters he fled in terror to the raja, leaving the army to shift for itself. Haidar Ali then attacked it and won an easy victory. The raja surrendered Khanderao on Haidar Ali's promise to care for him as he would a pet parrot. This promise Haidar Ali kept. On his surrender Khanderao was confined in a cage and fed on rice and water until his death. Bowring, *Haidar Ali and Tippu Sultan*, p. 1.

of artillery, crossed the Kistna. Fazl Ali Khan fell back on Haidar Ali's main army, which lay in an entrenched camp between Savanur and Bednur. Haidar Ali's force, which consisted of twenty thousand cavalry, twenty thousand disciplined infantry and twenty thousand irregulars, was greatly outnumbered. But Haidar Ali hoped that his enemy might be induced to attack his entrenchments, and concentrated his men within his camp. Madhavrao wisely declined to send his men against a fortified position, and, by sending his cavalry in every direction, soon cut Haidar Ali's communications. At the same time he sent detachments which rapidly recovered the Maratha districts seized by Haidar Ali Khan. Haidar Ali then changed his tactics and led out in person twenty thousand men, intending by a feigned retreat to lead his enemy to attack his camp. Madhavrao used Haidar Ali's own ruse to compass his defeat. Swarms of Maratha cavalry led Haidar Ali several miles from his camp, while the main Maratha army closed in on his flanks and rear. Only with the greatest difficulty and after suffering immense losses did Haidar Ali succeed in extricating himself. He fell back on his camp, which Madhavrao invested. A few days later Haidar Ali, in the hope of cutting off one of Madhavrao's detachments, moved out with a thousand cavalry, two thousand picked infantry and four light guns. He was attacked and so severely defeated that of his force only he and fifty cavalry escaped.

The investment of the camp continued until the middle of June 1764, when the violence of the monsoon forced Madhavrao to raise the siege and to canton his troops to the east of Savanur. But before the monsoon ended, Madhavrao passed large detachments over the Tungabhadra river and reduced the eastern districts of Bednur and western districts of Mysore, while the dispirited army of Haidar Ali helplessly watched his operations from their camp. Early in 1765, Madhavrao renewed the investment with such vigour that Haidar Ali abandoned his camp and retreated on Mysore. He experienced the usual fate of those who have retreated before a Maratha army. Three days after the retreat had begun Madhavrao intercepted it and forced Haidar Ali to a general action. The result was a great Maratha victory. In killed alone Haidar Ali lost three thousand cavalry and six thousand infantry, and the shattered remnants of his army fled in the utmost disorder to the woods. The garrisons of the Bednur fortresses, Ikkeri and Anantapur, surrendered after a feeble resistance, and Haidar Ali with such troops as he could rally took refuge in Bednur. By this time Raghunathrao had on Madhavrao's invitation taken over the command of the army, and to him the desperate adventurer made overtures of peace. Now, if ever, was the time to have destroyed this formidable foe. But the treacherous Raghunathrao was anxious to secure a retreat for himself, should his ambitious spirit find no scope in his own country. He therefore granted a most favourable peace. All that Haidar Ali was required to do was to restore to Murarirao the fortress of Gooti and the surrounding districts, which he had taken from him on Murarirao's recent desertion to the Peshwa; to give up all claims on Savanur, and to nav

thirty-two lakhs of rupees by way of indemnity. On Murarirao the Peshwa was to confer the title of *Senapati* or commander-in-chief, in honour of his gallant kinsman Santaji Ghorpade. Madhavrao was not consulted as to the terms of peace, which were conveyed by Naro Shankar Dani, who at the same time entered on Raghunathrao's behalf into a secret understanding with Haidar Ali. Nevertheless the honourable boy, although rightly incensed, would not repudiate the treaty, and in February 1765, upon receipt of the thirty-five lakhs, he began to withdraw his troops from the frontiers of Mysore. By June 1765 he was back in Poona.

Madhavrao had acquiesced in the grant of lands worth thirty-two lakhs a year to Janoji Bhosle; but he had not forgiven the treachery by which it had been acquired. Nor had Janoji's subsequent conduct been such as to merit forgiveness. Resenting the public rebuke given him by the young Peshwa, he had been in constant communication with Raghunathrao's wife Anandibai in the hope of instigating her husband to a fresh rebellion. The secret service of Madhavrao was excellent and he was fully aware of Janoji Bhosle's seditious correspondence. Determined to punish him, he found an ally ready to hand in Nizam Ali, who felt justly indignant at the perfidy that had cost him the defeat of Rakshasabhavan. Nizam Ali, too, was free to act with vigour. He had murdered one brother, Salabat Jang, who, after his dismissal from the post of diwan, had tried to carve out for himself a kingdom in the Carnatic. He readily listened to Madhavrao's proposals, and in the cold weather of 1765-6 a combined army of Marathas and Moghuls invaded Berar, and on January 4, 1766, forced Janoji to surrender three-quarters of the grants of thirty-two lakhs given him for his desertion. Of the twenty-four lakhs thus surrendered, Nizam Ali secured fifteen lakhs in return for a secret understanding to help Madhavrao in a campaign against Haidar Ali. Nizam Ali, however, was a broken reed. So far from giving Madhavrao any assistance, he entered into a secret understanding with Lord Clive to compass not only the downfall of Haidar Ali but the defeat of the Marathas. Nor was this all. Nizam Ali, at the same time, allied himself with Haidar Ali to conquer Arcot from Mahomed Ali. These facts were soon known to Madhavrao, and in the cold weather of 1766 he determined to act without his perfidious confederate. Haidar Ali feared to meet the Marathas in the field, and tried to stay their advance by destroying the reservoirs, poisoning the wells, and laying waste the country. But his orders were not properly carried out. Madhavrao's force, hardly distressed by Haidar Ali's measures, overran the countryside, and by the end of March took Sirga, Ouscotta and Mudgiri. At the same time Nizam Ali and the English threatened to cross Haidar Ali's northern and southern frontiers. Haidar Ali sent a Brahman called Appaji Ram to throw himself on Madhavrao's mercy. The envoy's ready wit and diplomatic skill won the fancy of the young prince and he agreed to evacuate the occupied districts on payment of thirty-five lakhs of rupees. Half was paid in March 1767. For the remaining seventeen and a half lakhs the district of Kolar was pledged. The balance was duly paid in May 1767, and Madhavrao

returned in triumph to Poona. The demands of the English and Nizam Ali to share in the spoils were very properly rejected.

While Madhavrao had thus been heightening in the Carnatic his reputation as a skilful commander, Raghunathrao had met with misfortune in the north. It was the young Peshwa's ambition to avenge Panipat and recover Delhi. But he held the wise view that he should finish his work in the Carnatic before attempting another more arduous task in the north. Raghunathrao, however, urged an immediate advance northward, and obtained from his nephew the command of a considerable force. In January 1766, he marched for Delhi, accompanied by Malharrao Holkar. Unhappily for the success of the expedition, the latter, wise and experienced in northern warfare, died on May 10, 1766, at Alampur, leaving behind him the reputation of a dashing, and above all of an openhanded and generous, leader.

Deprived of his counsels, Raghunathrao failed to achieve anything. The Jats successfully disputed the crossing of the Chambal river. Raghunathrao, to punish the Jats, turned from the north and invested Gohad. It was successfully defended by the rana, who from an obscure landholder had risen after Panipat to considerable power. At last, after a lengthy siege, in the course of which the lives of his men and the contents of his treasure-chest were alike squandered, Raghunathrao was glad to accept three lakhs of rupees as the price of his departure. He reached the Deccan in June 1767, after an improvident and futile campaign of eighteen months, shortly after his victorious nephew. Angry alike at his own failure and at Madhavrao's success, he again turned a willing ear to the poisonous counsels of Anandibai. He talked openly of becoming a religious ascetic and of retiring to Benares or Nasik, that he might pass his remaining years in penances and austerities, at the same time he entered into correspondence with Janoji Bhosle. Madhavrao, aware of his uncle's treasonable activity, offered him a *jaghire* round Trimbak worth twelve lakhs a year, and the forts of Aundhe and Trimbak, but nothing would satisfy Raghunathrao short of half the Maratha empire. This ridiculous demand Madhavrao sternly rejected and he watched his uncle's movements closely. Unaware or disdainful of his nephew's observation, Raghunathrao raised fifteen thousand men and obtained contingents from Damaji Gaikwad and Holkar's diwan, Gangadhar Yashwant. He also received promises of powerful support from Janoji Bhosle. Long before the latter could give Raghunathrao substantial aid, Madhavrao was on the march northward with a numerous army. On June 10, 1768, he surprised his uncle's force in an open plain near Dhodap fort close to Nasik. Raghunathrao's levies, outnumbered and outgeneraled, were driven into the fort and there forced to capitulate. Raghunathrao was taken prisoner and sent to the Shanwar palace at Poona. He was allowed to see his wife, and his recently-adopted son Amritrao; but he was not permitted to leave the precincts of the palace or without permission to see other visitors. The charge of the state prisoner was entrusted to Nana Phadnavis.

Having crushed Raghunathrao, it remained for the Peshwa to reduce Janoji Bhosle to complete obedience. He first renewed his alliance with Nizam Ali and, skilfully masking his real intention both from Haidar Ali and the English, suddenly led a combined Maratha and Moghul army into Berar by the road that leads past Basim and Karanj. Janoji Bhosle at first ordered his *subhedar* to oppose them, but his troops were beaten and their commander killed. Janoji then adopted different tactics. He conducted a guerilla warfare for some time with success, but came to realize that it was impossible for him to fight for ever against the immense resources of his enemies. He sued for, and was granted, peace.

On March 23, 1769, Janoji Bhosle signed an agreement at Kankapur, by which he abandoned the remainder of the lands assigned to him as a return for his desertion at Rakshasabhavan. His military establishment was fixed at a certain figure and could not be increased without the Peshwa's leave; he was forbidden to correspond with the Nizam, the English, the emperor, or the nawab of Oudh, and he was required to pay an indemnity of five lakhs and one rupee in five annual instalments. He was in fact reduced to the condition of a subordinate ally, who could claim help if his territories were invaded but to whom no independent relations with foreign powers were permitted. The Peshwa had now humbled his enemies at home and he was once more at liberty to consider Maratha affairs abroad.

## CHAPTER XLVI

### MADHAVRAO'S THIRD MYSORE WAR AND PROGRESS OF AFFAIRS AT DELHI

WHILE Madhavrao had been engaged in reducing to obedience Raghunathrao and Janoji Bhosle, Haidar Ali had resumed his activities. By a series of skilfully-fought actions he forced the English at Madras to enter with him into a defensive alliance aimed directly against the Marathas, although their name did not appear in the treaty. Encouraged by this success, Haidar resumed offensive action against the Peshwa. Regardless of his previous engagements, he withheld the promised tribute and marched on Savanur, levying contributions as he went. The Peshwa's fortunate campaign against Janoji Bhosle left him free in the cold weather of 1769 to chastise the faithless invader. Directly Haidar Ali heard that the Maratha armies were in motion, he retired southwards towards Seringapatam. As he retired, he sent an urgent demand for English help. That help, however, was not forthcoming. Haidar Ali, left to his own resources, sent Appaji Ram to treat. The Peshwa, who wished entirely to destroy Haidar Ali's power, demanded a crore of rupees as indemnity and twelve lakhs as arrears of tribute. He further asserted that, as the successor of the Adil Shah, king of Bijapur, he was entitled to the undisputed possession of the whole Mysore state. As Appaji Ram was empowered only to offer a payment of twelve lakhs, the negotiations broke down.

and the Maratha advance continued. It assumed no longer the character of a raid for levying contribution, but with the army went experienced civil officers, who took over the administration of each district as it was occupied. Without opposition Madhavrao reached Bangalore. Masking it by an investing force, he pressed on to Kolar, Nandidurg and Mulwagar, all of which he took by assault. At Nijagal, an inaccessible fortress thirty miles north-west of Bangalore, he was for some months checked by the skill of the commandant, Sardar Khan, but on May 1, 1770, it was stormed by the *Polygar*, or robber baron of Chitaldurg at the head of a body of Berads. At the beginning of June 1770, Madhavrao in the full tide of success was struck down by illness and compelled to return to Poona. With him returned his brother Narayanrao, who had been wounded in the hand at the siege of Nijagal. The campaign was continued by Trimbakrao Pethe, who added to Madhavrao's successes the capture, after a two months' siege, of Gurramkonda, a great fortress securely situated among the Eastern Ghats.

Madhavrao had intended to resume command of the Maratha field force in October, but the state of his health prevented him. He, therefore, sent Appa Balwant Mehendale, the son of the gallant Balwantrao Mehendale, with a considerable reinforcement to serve with Trimbakrao Pethe. Haidar Ali had avoided the Marathas in the field, but had several times raided their camps and once or twice driven them from their new conquests. At the end of January 1771, Haidar Ali, learning that Madhavrao was not likely to rejoin the army, sent a strong detachment from Bangalore to recover Balapur, a strong place twenty-four miles distant, which the Marathas had occupied. Trimbakrao Pethe learnt of the enterprise and, overtaking the detachment, cut it to pieces. This defeat roused the indignant Haidar Ali to try a general action against Trimbakrao. He took up a strong position near Mailghat, hoping that Trimbakrao, relying on his superior numbers, would be tempted to attack him. But Trimbakrao, as Madhavrao had done, declined an engagement and overran district after district of Mysore. Haidar Ali was forced to retreat towards Seringapatam. At 9 p.m. on March 5, 1771, while Haidar was still under the effects of a carouse, Trimbakrao surprised and completely dispersed the retreating army in the Cherkoli Hills, taking its entire artillery, all its elephants and most of its horses. Haidar Ali with a few well-mounted attendants escaped at full gallop to his capital. There he formed a small corps for its defence. Trimbakrao besieged, but was unable to take; Seringapatam, and in June 1772 Haidar Ali sued for and was granted peace. The conditions were severe. He was forced to surrender all Shivaji's former conquests, including Kolar, Bangalore, Ouscotta, Balapur and Sira, as well as the fortresses of Mudgiri and Gurramkonda. He agreed also to pay thirty-six lakhs as indemnity and fourteen lakhs as annual tribute. The Mysore kingdom was now reduced to a smaller area than before Haidar Ali's advent to power, and Madhavrao could in future disregard him. But the vindictive adventurer vented his spite on Nandiraja the helpless raja of Mysore, who had hoped to improve his condition by appealing

to Trimbakrao Pethe. Haidar Ali had him strangled in his bath, and substituted for him his brother Chamraja.

At this point we must return to affairs at Delhi. The Abdali had, as I have already related, left Delhi for Afghanistan on March 22, 1761. Before leaving, he had acknowledged Ali Gohar as the Emperor Shah Alam, and had entrusted the capital and the royal family to the care of Najib-ud-Daulat. Shah Alam had fled first to the court of Shuja-ud-Daula, the nawab of Oudh, and, after the latter's defeat by the English at Buxar on October 23, 1764, had escaped to Allahabad, where he lived under English protection, so the emperor's government was conducted in his absence by Najib-ud-Daulat. When Surajmal, the Jat chief, tried to remove him, Najib-ud-Daulat defeated him in an action, wherein the Jat chief was himself killed. Afterwards Najib-ud-Daulat successfully defended Delhi against Surajmal's son, Jawahir Mal. In 1769 the Peshwa, freed from the menace of Raghunathrao's ambitions, was able to devote himself to affairs on his northern frontier. Late in 1769 a Maratha army crossed the Chambal river. The Poona troops were under the command of Visaji Krishna Biniwala, who had had considerable experience of warfare in the Carnatic. He was joined by a large contingent under Tukoji Holkar and another under Madhavrao Sindia, the only surviving son of Ranoji Sindia. Jayappa had been murdered at Nagore, Dattaji and Jyotaba had fallen at the Badâon ghat. Tukoji, as well as Jayappa's son Jankoji, had been killed at Panipat. Madhavrao, although illegitimate, was clearly entitled to succeed to the Sindia *jaghire*. He had been severely wounded at Panipat but had recovered, except for a lameness that lasted all his life. He had eminent courage and rare capacity; nevertheless Raghunathrao, who disliked him, tried to obtain a grant of the Sindia *jaghire* for Manaji Sindia Phakde, a distant connexion. But the Peshwa Madhavrao overruled his uncle and in 1769 Madhavrao Sindia was firmly established in power.

Tukoji Holkar, who commanded the Holkar contingent, was no relation to Malharrao. The latter, as I have mentioned, had died in 1766. His son Khanderao had predeceased his father, having been killed at Kumbher, eleven miles north-east of Bharatpur. On Malharrao Holkar's death his estates passed to Khanderao's son Malerao Holkar. But the latter did not long survive his grandfather, and Khanderao's widow Ahalyabai became head of the administration. She appointed Tukoji Holkar, a trusted officer of Malharrao, to the command of the army.

The combined Maratha forces first entered Rajputana, where they levied ten lakhs as arrears of tribute. They next invaded the Jat country, won a victory near Bharatpur and extorted a payment of sixty-five lakhs. The approach of the victorious Maratha army induced Najib-ud-Daulat to offer terms of peace. Madhavrao Sindia wished, in revenge for his wound at Panipat, to exterminate the Rohillas; but Visaji Krishna Biniwala advised acceptance of Najib-ud-Daulat's offer, and his advice was followed by the Peshwa. The adhesion of Najib-ud-Daulat to the Maratha cause saved for the time his own possessions; but Madhavrao Sindia was given a free hand



against the other Rohilla chiefs, Hafiz<sup>\*</sup> Rahmat and Dhundi Khan, who had large fiefs in the Doab, the land between the Jamna and the Ganges. In 1769, he and Tukoji Holkar crossed the Jamna, drove the Rohillas across the Ganges and occupied the fortress of Etawah, by which they overawed the entire Doab. They now conceived the brilliant idea of inducing Shah Alam to leave Allahabad and to exchange the protection of the English for that of the Marathas. They held out glowing hopes to the vain and foolish prince, and dazzled his eyes with the promised glories of an empire swayed by him and protected from foreign aggression by Maratha swords and Maratha valour. Shah Alam yielded to the lure of a pageant throne and, leaving his English protectors, joined the camp of Madhavrao Sindia. In December 1771, the emperor, escorted by Visaji Krishna Biniwala and a great Maratha army entered his capital. On Shah Alam Madhavrao Sindia pressed the conquest of Rohilkhand. In October 1769, Najib-ud-Daulat died and his son Zabita Khan succeeded to his territories. To Zabita Khan the emperor bore an intense enmity, as he suspected the young Rohilla of having debauched his sister Kherunnissa as well as other ladies of the imperial household. He readily accepted Madhavrao Sindia's view, and in January 1772, an army of ninety thousand men invaded the fief of Zabita Khan. The Maratha cavalry was commanded by Madhavrao Sindia. The small Moghul force was led by Najib Khan, an officer in the imperial service. Zabita Khan tried to hold the northern bank of the Ganges; but the imperial army crossed the river with ease. The Rohillas lost all courage. Zabita Khan and the other chiefs fled to the hills, and the Marathas plundered the whole of Rohilkhand and captured the ladies of Zabita Khan's household, whom they held to ransom for one and a half lakhs. Afterwards they resold Rohilkhand to Zabita Khan, and made the emperor grant to them in return for their protection the districts of Kora and Allahabad, which were in the respective possession of Shuja-ud-Daula and the English. The emperor's dominions were by these means reduced to the single town of Delhi, and he bitterly regretted the step he had taken. In a fit of despair, he directed Najib Khan to drive the Maratha army from Delhi. Visaji Krishna Biniwala had not expected this step on the part of Shah Alam, and perhaps felt some remorse for the scant courtesy with which he had treated the emperor. He withdrew his troops and sent to Poona for orders. To this despatch he received no immediate reply. For on November<sup>\*</sup> 18, 1772, the greatest of the Peshwas had died in his twenty-eighth year.

In June 1770, Madhavrao had been forced, as already mentioned, to abandon to Trimbakrao the command of the army of the Carnatic; and, although his health improved during the monsoon of 1770, directly he got ready to leave Poona on field service he had a relapse. He had an inherited tendency to consumption; for from that disease both Ghimnaji Appa and Balaji had fallen victims. Gradually it took a firmer hold of the young prince's frame. A ballad in the *Shahigram* collection declares that, finding his end near, he went in state with his beautiful young wife Ramabai to Theur, a favourite spot of his, some

thirteen miles from Poona. There Ramabai poured out continuous prayers to the family god Ganpati. But the latter appeared to her in a vision and told her that the matter was not in his but in Vishnu's hands. Ramabai then made her prayers to Laxmi's spouse, but to no purpose. Finding that nothing she could do would save her husband, she resolved to face death beside him. On the demise of the gallant young prince, she burnt herself on the same pyre, in spite of all the efforts of her family to dissuade her.<sup>1</sup>

The youth and early manhood of Madhavrao had been spent in the service of his country. While still a child he had assumed the vast burden of the Maratha empire. Threatened both by domestic and foreign enemies, he had triumphed signally over all. Yet his triumphs had brought him no rest. For, victorious over his foes, he had spent his remaining years in tireless labour to better the condition of his people. Every department was quickened by his supervision, his industry and his example. His secret intelligence was faultless and, no matter how remote the officer guilty of acts of tyranny, he rarely escaped punishment. The Peshwa's armies went well equipped on service, for the entire military organization was under his direct control. Quick to anger, he was no less quick to forgive. And the only fault that the harshest critic can find in this admirable ruler is that he shortened a life, precious to his people, by his arduous and unceasing toil.

## CHAPTER XLVII

### NARAYANRAO AND RAGHUNATHRAO

THE last days of the dead Peshwa had been embittered by fears for his brother Narayanrao who, since Madhavrao had no issue, was his natural heir and successor. Narayanrao lacked the eminent qualities of Madhavrao. He was only seventeen at his accession, and was a heedless and somewhat mischievous boy. Madhavrao indeed exclaimed once with prophetic insight that the word *rajya* or rule was not written on his brother's forehead.<sup>2</sup> He endeavoured to train Narayanrao according to his own stern ideals. He took him to the Carnatic, where, as already related, Narayanrao received a wound in the hand. By his example and precept he tried to plant in his younger brother's heart his own serene courage. In this connexion a well-known story is related in the *Peshwa's Bakhar*. Once Madhavrao and Narayanrao, Khanderao Darekar and Hiraji Pataskar were seated together in a tent, when a *mast* elephant broke loose and rushed towards the Peshwa's tent. Narayanrao was frightened and would have run away. But the Peshwa put his hand on the boy's arm and checked him, saying, 'No harm can come to us if we are not destined to be killed by the elephant.' Narayanrao sat down again, but the danger had

<sup>1</sup> The writer had the signal honour of unveiling a *vrindavan* erected by the Chinchwad Sansthan at Theur in honour of this heroic princess.

<sup>2</sup> Khare, *Adhikar Yog*, p. 7.

not passed; for the elephant broke into the tent. There, however, it was attacked by Khanderao Darekar and Hiraji Patankar with daggers and lances. They stopped it until its mahout came up and mounted it. When Madhavrao's health no longer allowed his personal supervision, he, for six months before his death, made Sakham Babu instruct Narayanrao in administrative duties. In this way Narayanrao improved considerably. But the real danger, as Madhavrao foresaw, was the restless ambition of Raghunathrao, and above all of his wife Anandibai. They both had fretted greatly at his imprisonment and in 1772 Raghunathrao had corrupted his guards and escaped from the Shanwar palace and fled to Tuljapur. He was retaken and imprisoned with greater severity. Nevertheless, what he had done before, he could do again; and Madhavrao feared that upon his own death Raghunathrao would break his bonds and seize the throne. There were only two sure methods of dealing with him. The first was by his execution and the second was by reconciliation. The kindly spirit of the Peshwa recoiled from the first, he therefore adopted the second method. On October 16, 1772,<sup>1</sup> Madhavrao sent for his uncle from Poona to Theur, and in the presence of Sakham Babu was solemnly reconciled to him. He obtained from Raghunathrao a promise that he would act rightly by his nephew Narayanrao, and thereafter he set Raghunathrao at liberty. After Madhavrao's death and the completion of his funeral ceremonies, Narayanrao went to Satara fort, where the titular King Ramraja formally invested him with the office of Peshwa. He then returned to Poona. Raghunathrao at first kept his promise, and for a month or six weeks uncle and nephew were on the most amicable terms. But the former was wholly under the influence of his wife Anandibai; while the latter was equally submissive to his mother Gopikabai. And the contending passions of two jealous and ambitious women set at naught the hopes and intentions of the dead Peshwa. Gopikabai urged on her son that it was impossible that Raghunathrao could forgive the past, and begged Narayanrao to confine him as before. On April 11, 1773, in spite of the protests of Sakham Babu and Nana Phadnavis, Narayanrao had his uncle arrested and confined in the Shanwar palace, close to the Peshwa's own apartments. Narayanrao kept Sakham Babu in office as diwan, but he placed his chief confidence in Hari Ballal Phadke and a certain Babaji Barve. He also relied on the wisdom of Nana Phadnavis and of the latter's cousin, Moroba Baburao Phadnavis. Confident that he had effectually checked Raghunathrao's designs, Narayanrao left Poona to receive the congratulations of his mother Gopikabai, then at Gangapur. Raghunathrao, however, had still many supporters, and in the Peshwa's absence Anandibai tried to secure her husband's escape to Haidar Ali at Mysore. The plot was discovered and Raghunathrao was confined more strictly than ever. This exasperated Anandibai and she wove a far-reaching plot to destroy Narayanrao and to put her husband on the throne in his place.

<sup>1</sup> See Sardesai's article in *Vividhnyan Vistar*, p. 292.



NARAYANRAO PESHWA



In this plot she was aided by a number of Kayastha Prabhus, the agents of Mudhoji Bhosle. Janoji Bhosle had been present at Theur when Madhavrao died, and before the Peshwa's death had obtained leave to adopt Raghujī Bhosle, the eldest son of his brother Mudhoji. In May 1772 Janoji Bhosle died, and a quarrel arose between his brother's Mudhoji and Sabaji as to the guardianship of the adopted boy, who was still a minor. The brothers flew to arms and both appealed to the Peshwa. Narayanrao favoured Sabaji, while Raghunathrao favoured Mudhoji. When the latter sent his Prabhu agents to confer with Raghunathrao, they found him in prison; and they readily agreed to help Anandibai to compass his release from confinement and his accession to power. They found tools in the regular infantry known as Gardis, who were discontented at the stricter discipline recently introduced by Narayanrao, who longed for military glory in the Carnatic. Their leaders were Summersingh, Kharaksingh and Mahomed Yusuf, and they willingly promised to restore to power Raghunathrao, from whose easy-going and generous nature they expected ample concessions. The plot was so widespread that it was impossible wholly to conceal it, and it came to the ears of Raghujī Angre, who on the morning of August 30 warned the Peshwa. The latter repeated the warning to Hari Ballal Phadke and thought no more of the matter. Hari Ballal Phadke treated it as idle gossip and, taking no action whatever, actually left the palace to have breakfast with a friend. The young Peshwa, who had been to Parvati Hill, breakfasted late and then went to rest.

In the meantime Summersingh<sup>1</sup> had secured from Raghunathrao a paper which contained a promise to distribute nine lakhs among the regular infantry, provided they seized Narayanrao. The paper had passed through Anandibai's hands and she had changed the word *dharave* (seize) into *marave* (kill). Summersingh had now in his possession written orders to murder the Peshwa. At 2 p.m. he collected some two thousand men and massed them at the northern or Delhi gate of the Shanwar palace. The regular infantry on duty there under Kharaksingh joined Summersingh, and the combined force, overpowering the loyal troops, forced their way into the upper rooms and began to kill all whom they met. Icharam Dhere, the head of the household cavalry,<sup>1</sup> fled into a cowshed, but the Musulman sepoy, drunk with blood, followed him and killed every man and beast in the place. Narayanrao, who was sleeping heavily, did not wake up until the rebels were actually in his apartments. He fled to the rooms where his uncle was confined, and begged him to save him. Raghunathrao, who had never ordered his murder, would willingly have done so; but Summersingh, who knew nothing of Anandibai's forgery, would not listen. He, Kharaksingh, Mahomed Yusuf and one Tulaji Powar, a personal servant of Raghunathrao, tore Narayanrao from Raghunathrao's arms. The Peshwa's two servants, Naroba Phatak and Chaphaji Tilekar threw themselves unarmed between their master and his murderers; but their sacrifice was in vain. In a few

<sup>1</sup> *Peshwa's Bakhar.*

seconds all three were dead. The regular infantry then plundered the palace; and it was not till they had stripped it of everything valuable, that they returned to Raghunathrao and saluted him as Peshwa.

Raghunathrao, genuinely alarmed at what had happened, pretended that he was entirely guiltless in the matter and that Narayanrao had fallen the victim of a military tumult. At the same time he took steps to secure his nephew's inheritance. He sent for Maloji Ghorpade, Bajaba Purandare and Bhavanrao Pratinidhi, and tried to convince them of his innocence. He also ordered Sakharam Bapu, Trimbakrao Pethe, Hari Ballal Phadke and the other prominent figures at the Peshwa's court to arrange for Narayanrao's funeral ceremonies. Gangabai, Narayanrao's widow was anxious to commit *sati*, but Anandibai, who feared the effect of a *sati*'s curse, locked her in her room. In spite of Raghunathrao's protests and precautions, the conviction of his guilt rapidly gained ground. On the *tilanjali*, or the tenth day after Narayanrao's murder, when sesamum seed soaked in water was poured out as a libation to the dead man's spirit, Trimbakrao Pethe, Nana Phadnavis, Hari Ballal Phadke and nine others known in history as the *barabhai*, or twelve brothers, bound themselves by an oath to frustrate Raghunathrao's ambitions. For a time Raghunathrao's cause seemed to prosper. He obtained clothes of investiture from Ramraja at Satara, and began to form an administration. He confirmed Sakharam Bapu as diwan, but he gave his chief confidence to Chinto Vithal Rarikar and Sakharam Hari Gupte. The latter, as a leader of the Prabhu caste in Poona and also because of his distinguished gallantry at Rakshasathavan, was a particular friend of the new Peshwa.

The foreign affairs of the state, indeed, required the closest attention. Narayanrao on becoming Peshwa had replied to Visaji Krishna Biniwala's despatch by ordering him to drive Najaf Khan from Delhi. Lack of funds had reduced the latter's forces to five thousand cavalry and four battalions of infantry, two of which were disciplined and commanded by a Frenchman called Médoc. Nevertheless Najaf Khan with undaunted spirit drew up his small force two miles outside the city, his rear being protected by the guns of Delhi. He repulsed a general attack of the Maratha horse, but foolishly pursuing them too far was surrounded and escaped with difficulty. The two disciplined battalions sustained the weight of the Maratha attack all day and retired into the city under cover of night. Next day the Marathas encamped under the walls. Shah Alam had no longer any hope of a successful defence. He admitted the Marathas into the capital and accepted their terms. They were not severe. Najaf Khan was dismissed from the emperor's service and Zabita Khan was appointed the imperial commander-in-chief, nominally as the deputy of the Peshwa. Shah Alam also formally granted to the Marathas the two provinces of Allahabad and Kora. But the English refused to permit the Maratha occupation, and in May 1773 Narayanrao, who was proposing to lead in person the entire military forces of the kingdom, to the conquest of the Carnatic, recalled Visaji Krishna and his army. After Visaji's recall the Maratha power in northern India

declined. Najaf Khan returned to Delhi and Shuja-ud-Daula drove the Marathas from Etawah, their stronghold in the Doab.

On the eastern frontier Nizam Ali was again actively offensive. He had allied himself to Sabhaji Bhosle and had helped to establish him as ruler of Berar. In the south Haidar Ali was still more aggressive. Aware of the disputes between Narayanrao and Raghunathrao, he had through 1773 carefully equipped his army to be ready at a moment's notice. On hearing of Narayanrao's murder, he at once despatched his son Tippu with a large force to recover the country taken from him by Madhavrao. In a short and brilliant campaign he won back all his lost possessions.

It was against Nizam Ali that Raghunathrao first decided to move. Early in November 1773, before the rains had ceased and before Nizam Ali had mobilized his troops or could effect a junction with Sabaji Bhosle, Raghunathrao had crossed the frontier. Nizam Ali collected what troops he could and hastened to meet the invaders. He was beaten in the field and forced to take shelter in the great fort of Bidar, where he was soon closely invested. In despair he sued for peace and offered to cede lands worth twenty lakhs a year. Raghunathrao refused the offer. Nizam Ali obtained an armistice and then took a step which showed how accurately he gauged his opponent's character.<sup>1</sup> Without informing his staff and, accompanied only by two hundred troopers and his minister, Rukn-ud-Daula, he rode into the Maratha camp and up to the door of Raghunathrao's tent. The latter received his visitor courteously and led him inside. There the Nizam stripped from his neck his ornaments and threw them, as well as his sword and shield, at Raghunathrao's feet, and implored his conqueror to take such of his possessions as he needed. Raghunathrao's vanity and generosity were alike touched, and in a foolish moment he gave back to the Nizam his jewels and his arms and refused to take any ransom from his suppliant. Not content with this, he bestowed on the Nizam handsome robes and gave several banquets in his honour. Having thus lost by his weakness not only the prizes but the cost of the war, he bade the Nizam good-bye and turned southwards towards the Carnatic.

Raghunathrao had always been on friendly terms with Haidar Ali, regarding him no doubt as a possible ally. He would, therefore, in any case have been satisfied with the return of the districts ceded to Madhavrao, but, by the time he had reached Bellary, he had received news of so grave a character that he was glad to accept a cash payment of six lakhs, and promise from Haidar Ali to pay an annual tribute of six lakhs to Raghunathrao personally, and to support him against all other claimants to the office of Peshwa. Having thus failed to achieve anything substantial against either of the Musulman powers, Raghunathrao took the direction of Poona.

The news that had alarmed Raghunathrao was the growth of the conspiracy of the *barabhai*, or twelve brothers, set on foot by Nana

<sup>1</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar*, p. 40. The incident is related somewhat differently in Grant Duff, Vol. II, p. 10.



Phadnavis and the other takers of the *tilanjali oath*. They had first secured the adhesion of Sakharam Bapu, whose judgment was growing clouded with age, and who resented the peculiar favour shown by Raghunathrao to his Prabhu namesake, Sakharam Hari Gupte. Gradually the plot came to include most of the prominent officers of the state, and to them were joined three ladies of the Peshwa's family—Parvatibai, the widow of Sadashivrao, Gopikabai, the widow of Balaji Bajirao, and Gangabai, the widow of Narayanrao Ballal. A day or two before Narayanrao's death, he had informed his intimates that Gangabai was enceinte. The conspirators thus hoped to displace Raghunathrao by a son of Narayanrao. Anandibai was aware that Gangabai had hopes of issue, and had forced her to take drugs, so as to procure a miscarriage. But the drugs had been without effect, and as time passed it became certain that Gangabai was about to become a mother. Had Anandibai been in Poona, she would assuredly have killed Gangabai, but she had gone on field service with Raghunathrao and the army. In January 1774 Nana Phadnavis, who had charge of Gangabai's affairs, arrested some armed men, who confessed that they were assassins sent by Anandibai to murder Gangabai. This gave the desired excuse. On January 30, Parvatibai was sent in charge of Gangabai to Purandar fort, and with them was made to go Durgabai, Anandibai's daughter, so that she might be a witness of Gangabai's confinement.<sup>1</sup> Having done this, the conspirators openly formed themselves into a regency to govern the country for Narayanrao's widow and unborn son. At the same time they arrested all Raghunathrao's adherents, and entered into a correspondence with Sabaji Bhosle and Nizam Ali, both of whom—in spite of Raghunathrao's generous weakness—agreed to support the regency. Raghunathrao acted as became an experienced soldier. He had detached Trimbakrao Pethe to watch Sabaji Bhosle, while he himself invaded Mysore. Afterwards he learnt that Trimbakrao Pethe was one of the leading conspirators and he determined to overwhelm him before he could form a junction with the Moghul, Poona or Berar troops. Trimbakrao, elated by his signal victory over Haidar Ali, accepted battle on March 4, 1774, at Kasegaon near Pandharpur. In twenty minutes he was completely defeated. His army was destroyed, and he himself was taken prisoner and so outrageously insulted by Anandibai, that he soon died of wounds and vexation.<sup>2</sup> Raghunathrao's cause prospered on account of his victory and he now marched on Poona. Had he entered it, he would have recovered his former supremacy, for the ministers in their despair were reduced to the expedient of releasing Ramraja and setting him up as a rival to their enemy. But on the road he learnt of so many ramifications of the plot against him that his heart failed him, and, turning from Poona, he marched to Burhanpur. The retreat nullified his previous success, and on April 18, 1774, his hopes were shattered by the birth of

<sup>1</sup> Khare, *Life of Nana Phadnavis*.

<sup>2</sup> Anandibai sent a maidservant to wave round Trimbakrao's head lamps made of cow-dung, a coarse way of insulting him.

Gangabai's son, known in history as Savai Madhavrao. Forty days later Sakharam Bapu and Nana Phadnavis obtained from Ramraja the child's investiture as Peshwa.

Raghunathrao's affairs were now going from bad to worse. He had hoped that Holkar and Sindia would send him troops to Burhanpur, and crossed the Narbada. Thereupon Mudhoji Bhosle, who was unwilling to follow him farther north, left him with all his contingent save seven thousand men. Holkar and Sindia welcomed Raghunathrao, as they wished his support in an advance into Gujarat. But in his rear followed a large army under Hari Ballal Phadke who, although still quite young, had already shown proofs of great capacity. Raghunathrao did not wish to take arms against the son of Narayanrao, as that course would have been unpopular. His plan was to seize Gangabai and Savai Madhavrao and return to Poona as regent on the latter's behalf. To achieve this end, he entered into correspondence with Moroba Phadnavis, now bitterly jealous of his cousin Nana, and with Bajaba Purandare, and Babaji Naik, the grandson of the creditor of Bajirao Balaji. It was agreed that these three should seize Parvatibai, Gangabai, Savai Madhavrao, Sakharam Bapu and Nana Phadnavis, who had, early in June, taken shelter from the heavy rainfall of Purandar in Saswad. The plot leaked out, and on the night of June 30, Gangabai and the young prince were carried back through pouring rain to Purandar fort. A second attempt was made in November, by Moroba Phadnavis, to seize the fort by corrupting the Musulman soldiers of the garrison. They in turn tried to corrupt the Maratha soldiers, but in vain. The matter was reported by them to the commandant, who cut off the heads of the disloyal Musulmans. No evidence was obtainable against Moroba Phadnavis and he remained unpunished. In the meantime the cash payments made by Haidar Ali to Raghunathrao had been exhausted, and the pretender had no other source of revenue but the plunder of villages in the domains of Holkar and Sindia, a course which soon rendered his presence distasteful to his hosts, and they readily listened to proposals from Nana Phadnavis to make Raghunathrao their prisoner. At the same time the conduct of Raghunathrao's allies alienated many of his warmest adherents. Basalat Jang, the younger brother of Nizam Ali, laid waste the country round Miraj, while Haidar Ali overran once more the Maratha districts south of the Tungabhadra river. In December Raghunathrao learnt of the intended treachery of Madhavrao Sindia and Tukoji Holkar. He left his wife Anandibai in Dhar, where she gave birth to a son, named Bajirao, the last independent prince of Poona; and he himself with the remains of his army retreated towards Baroda, where he sought the alliance of Govindrao Gaikvad. Damaji Gaikvad had during his lifetime, put Govindrao in command of the contingent sent in 1758 to Raghunathrao's help. Damaji died in 1770, leaving four sons, Sayaji, Govindrao, Manikji and Fatehsing. The two eldest sons claimed their father's inheritance, each with a show of right. Sayaji was the older in years, but the son of the second wife. Govindrao was younger than Sayaji, but the son of the *patrani* or chief wife. He was moreover a man of

some intelligence, while Sayaji was an imbecile. Manikji and Fatehsing were younger than the other two, and were the sons of the third wife, but Fatehsing tried to make up for the weakness of his own title by vigorously supporting Sayaji, in whose name he hoped to govern. Govindrao had been taken prisoner with Raghunathrao after the battle of Dhodap, but, after paying as fines and fees a sum of fifty lakhs, he was declared to be Damaji Gaikwad's lawful heir. In 1771, Madhavrao reconsidered this decision and at Fatehsing's instance appointed Sayaji to be the heir. This order was once more reversed by Raghunathrao after the murder of Narayanrao; and, when Raghunathrao entered Gujarat, the two brothers were at open war and Govindrao was besieging Baroda. Govindrao cordially welcomed his new ally, especially as by a treaty signed on March 7, 1775, Raghunathrao had secured the active aid of the Bombay Government.

## CHAPTER XLVIII

### RAGHUNATHRAO AND THE ENGLISH

As early as April 1774, Raghunathrao, as he retreated from Poona, entered into negotiations with the Bombay Government. The latter, whose heads had been turned by Clive's victories in Bengal, readily agreed to support the pretender, believing, it would seem, that by their united efforts, they could overthrow the Maratha power. They offered to assist Raghunathrao with two thousand men, provided that he advanced fifteen to twenty thousand rupees in cash, and that, on his restoration as Peshwa, he ceded Bassein and Salsette and the neighbouring islands. Raghunathrao had some spark of patriotic feeling left and refused to cede the scene of Chimmaji Appa's toil and glory. Instead he offered to surrender districts in Gujarat worth eleven lakhs a year, and to pay six lakhs at once and a lakh and a half monthly in return for a contingent of 2,500 men and fifteen guns. While the negotiations were still proceeding, the English learnt that a great Portuguese fleet and army had reached Goa for the purpose of recovering Bassein and Salsette. The prospect of being again cut off by the Portuguese from the rich trade of the interior proved too much for the consciences of the English factors. On December 12, 1774, without any declaration of war, they invaded the Maratha territory. On December 28, they stormed Thana, and by January 1, 1775, they had reduced the whole island of Salsette. On March 6, 1775, Raghunathrao accepted what had happened and entered into an offensive and defensive alliance, agreeing to a number of cessions, including Salsette and Bassein, in return for a contingent of three thousand men, including seven hundred European soldiers. The chief reason for Raghunathrao's acquiescence in the action of the Bombay Government was his own defeat by Hari Ballal Phadke. The latter had effected a junction with Holkar and Sindia, who were now as anxious to destroy Raghunathrao's army as they formerly had been to help him, and had followed closely the pretender's retreat into Gujarat.



RAGHUNATHRAO BALAJI, PANDIT PRADHAN, PESHWA OF  
THE MARATHA EMPIRE



Govindrao, threatened by a superior army, raised the siege of Baroda and fell back beyond the river Mahi. Fatehsing Gaikvad, however, knew the country well, and under his guidance Hari Phadke crossed the river in three divisions and, attacking Raghunathrao and his ally Govindrao in centre, flank and rear, utterly defeated them. Raghunathrao himself, with a thousand horse, fled from the field and took shelter with Charles Malet, the head of the English factory in Cambay. Sakharam Hari Gupte took command of the beaten army and, with Govindrao Gaikvad, led it to Kapadwanj on the frontiers of Kathiawar.

From Cambay Raghunathrao made his way to Bhavnagar, on the sea-coast of Kathiawar, and thence sailed to Surat, where he met the transports that carried the English relief column under the command of Colonel Keating. On April 11, 1775, Colonel Keating effected a junction with Sakharam Gupte and Govindrao Gaikvad eleven miles north-east of Cambay. Their army amounted now to seven or eight thousand men and these were mutinous for want of pay. Colonel Keating stayed their clamours as best he could from his own treasure-chest, and then without any apparent plans wandered up and down south Gujarat, twice engaging Hari Phadke's force on the way without serious loss to either side. On May 5, Colonel Keating, who had halted at Matar in the Kaira district, received from the Bombay Government, who firmly believed in the invincibility of their tiny army, positive orders to march southwards on Poona. Raghunathrao, who knew the hopelessness of such a course, demurred, but finally consented. By May 17, the allied army had reached Napa in the Anand taluka of the Kaira district. On the 18th, they debouched on the plains of Adas, the spot where in 1725 Pilaji Gaikvad's treachery had enabled Hamid Khan to defeat Rustom Ali. When they were one and a half miles from Napa, Hari Phadke, supported by six guns, suddenly attacked their rear. The attack was for a long time successful. Eventually the English line rallied and the Marathas withdrew, leaving their enemies in possession of the battle-field. The loss of the English contingent was 222 and that of the allied army probably exceeded that of Hari Phadke's force. Both sides claimed the victory.<sup>1</sup> From Adas Colonel Keating continued his southward march, reaching Broach on May 29. On June 8, he tried in vain to cross the Narbada river, which was in flood. Hearing that Hari Phadke's force was at some distance, he resolved to surprise it, but the news of his intention reached Hari Phadke and he retreated along the north bank of the Narbada. It was now clear, even to Colonel Keating, that to march on Poona during the full fury of the monsoon was to court ruin. He and Raghunathrao agreed to retreat to Dabhai, the scene of Bajirao's victory over Trimbakrao Dabhade, with the intention of laying siege in the winter to Baroda. Fatehsing on his brother Sayaji's behalf now became anxious to negotiate and an agreement was entered into, by which Sayaji was left in possession of Baroda on condition of joining Raghunathrao. The latter bound himself to bestow on Govindrao a fief of ten lakhs.

<sup>1</sup> This battle is known as the battle of Adas or Aras.

On the whole Raghunathrao's cause had prospered by land and to this partial advantage was added a considerable victory of his allies at sea. Commodore John Moore, in command of a frigate<sup>1</sup> called the *Revenge* and a grab or sailing barge called the *Bombay* met at sea a fleet of six Maratha warships all in the interest of Nana Phadnavis. The English commodore at once attacked the hostile squadron, which tried to sail away. He succeeded in bringing to action the *Shamsher Jang*, a ship of forty-six guns. After a fight of three hours she blew up with all on board.

Suddenly the hopes of Raghunathrao, who had made sure of ultimate success, were dashed to the ground.

On October 19, 1774, three Englishmen, whose names have been immortalized in Macaulay's *Essay on Warren Hastings*, arrived in Calcutta. They were Colonel Clavering, Colonel Monson and Philip Francis. A fourth, Richard Barwell, joined them a few days later. The four together with Warren Hastings formed the new Supreme Council to which the English Parliament had entrusted the control of the English dominions in India. These gentlemen were soon at variance on almost every conceivable subject, but on one they were united. They were resolved at the earliest opportunity to assert their superiority over the Governments of Madras and Bombay. The recent conduct of the Bombay Government, which, without the leave of the Supreme Council, had engaged in a foreign war, stormed fortresses and fought battles, offered the Supreme Council the opportunity they desired. They declared the treaty with Raghunathrao invalid, and the war on his behalf 'impolitic, dangerous, unauthorized and unjust.' They directed the immediate cessation of hostilities and in spite of the protests of the Bombay Government adhered to their view. The Bombay Government had no alternative but to repeat these orders to Colonel Keating, who on receiving them fell back towards Surat, encamping at Karod, some twenty miles east of that city. Having thus reduced to obedience the Bombay Government, the Supreme Council sent to negotiate with the ministers of the infant Peshwa their own envoy, Colonel Upton, who reached Purandar on December 28, 1775. The ministers received him courteously, but complained of the conduct of the Bombay administration. They offered to pay the East India Company twelve lakhs of rupees to cover the cost of their recent campaigns in Salsette and Gujarat. In return they demanded the surrender of Raghunathrao, and the evacuation of Salsette and other districts occupied by the Bombay troops. On the other hand, Colonel Upton demanded the cession of Bassein, Salsette and of the revenues of Broach town and district. To this the ministers replied with some justice that they could not understand how the Bengal Government could seek to derive advantages from a war which they admitted was unjust. This view did not commend itself to Colonel Upton or the Supreme Council, and the Calcutta Government began to make preparations for a vigorous renewal of the war. Sooner than face the united onslaught of the English and Raghunathrao, the ministers,

<sup>1</sup> Low, *History of the Indian Navy*, Vol. I, p. 155

threatened as they were by treason at home, agreed to the cession of Salsette and the revenues of Broach city and of some of the lands in its neighbourhood. On March 1, 1770, Colonel Upton on behalf of the East India Company, and Sakharam Bapu, Nana Phadnavis and Sakharam Hari Gupte on behalf of the ministry, signed the treaty of Purandar. In addition to the aforesaid concessions, the ministry paid twelve lakhs of rupees to the Bombay Government. The treaty of Surat between Raghunathrao and the English was formally repudiated. Raghunathrao was to disband his army and was to reside at Kopergaon, a town on the Godavari river. There he was to receive twenty-five thousand rupees a month for his personal expenses and he was to be allowed a household of a thousand troopers and two hundred private servants. The last clause of the treaty was never carried out; for the Bombay Government refused to surrender Raghunathrao and continued to give him an asylum at Surat in spite of the protests of the ministers and the orders of the Supreme Council. In other respects the treaty was observed.

## CHAPTER XLIX

### THE PRETENDER AND THE ENGLISH WAR

IN England, during the wars between the Houses of York and Lancaster, the weakness of the central government tempted adventurous spirits to assume the part of claimants to the throne. In the Deccan the Perkin Warbecks and Lambert Simnels cropped up by scores. All the prominent leaders who had fallen at Panipat reappeared in various parts of the kingdom. Jankoji Sindia and the brother of Hari Bahad Phadke were both popular roles, but the most popular role of all was that of Sadashivrao, the son of Chimmaji Appa. Several impostors assumed his name and they obtained credence the more readily that his widow Parvatibai maintained to her death that the body found on the field of Panipat was not her husband's and that he had escaped and was living somewhere in hiding. She continued to call herself *Saubhagyavati*, a title only used by ladies whose husbands are still living. The pretenders were one after the other proved to be impudent impostors, and executed; yet their failures never deterred others from imitating them. The most successful was undoubtedly a Kanoja Brahman, a man of the same caste as Kalasha, the evil genius of Sambhaji. His name was Sukhnidhan, or the Treasure of Happiness, and he had proclaimed himself to be Sadashivrao during the reign of Madhavrao Ballal. That energetic prince promptly confined him in Miraj. He remained in prison until 1775, when Gopalrao Patwardhan begged the ministry to relieve him of his unpleasant charge, as he seemed likely to corrupt the guards and make himself master of the fortress. Sukhnidhan was then taken to Ratnagiri and handed over to the care of Ramchandra Naik Paranjpe, the subhedar.

There must have been something uncommon in the pretender Sukhnidhan, for he now won adherents from among the chief officers



of the state. The first to acknowledge him was the very *subhedar*, Paranjpe, to whose care he had been entrusted and he was soon in possession of the entire district of Rañnagiri. Soon his followers included Vyankatrao Ghorpade, the Chief of Inchalkaranji, Raghunathrao Kolatkar, the real Sadashivrao's brother-in-law, and Naro Shankar, the maternal uncle of the Peshwa's mother, Gangabai. Encouraged by his early successes, the pretender acted with the greatest energy. He seized the fleet and with its aid carried all the great forts along the coast, including Vijayadurg, Anjanvel and Suvarnadurg. He was soon master of the entire Konkan and at the head of twenty thousand men he carried the Bhor pass and the fort of Rajmachi. The ministry, distracted by other troubles, kept hoping that the imposture would be discovered and the pretender discredited. They were now forced to action by the prospect of his immediate march on Poona. Unable any longer to temporize, they appealed to Sindia for help and sent Bhivrao Panse to delay the pretender's advance as long as he could. Bhivrao Panse engaged him in minor actions and harassed his march so successfully, that Madhavrao Sindia was able to join Panse with a large army. The allied forces now attacked the pretender and completely defeated him. The unhappy Sukhnidhan fled to Bombay, but did not land. From Bombay he went to Kolaba, where he was arrested by Raghujı Angre. The latter handed him over to the ministry on condition that he should not be punished without a full inquiry. The ministry accordingly appointed a commission of twenty-seven persons presided over by Ramshastri. Other members were Gopinath Dikshit, Dhondoba Purandare, Hari Ballal Phadke and Babaji Naik Baramatikar, all men personally acquainted with the gallant Sadashivrao. After a most careful enquiry the commission pronounced the prisoner to be an impostor. He was driven in a bullock cart through Poona. He was then taken through it on the back of a camel, at last, on December 18, 1776, he was executed by having iron pegs hammered into his skull. The ministry next dealt severely with the pretender's followers. Vyankatrao was fined heavily, but escaped with his life. The ministers attached his entire property and only returned it on payment of sixty thousand rupees by way of *nazar* and a fine of twenty-five thousand rupees. Kolatkar was pardoned on the insistent prayers of Parvatibai, his sister. Ramchandra Naik Paranjpe was stripped of all his wealth and he and his family were imprisoned in different hill fortresses. Lesser offenders of the Brahmap caste were punished, not for their rebellion, but for dining with one not of their own community. In hundreds of villages throughout the Konkan they were forced in the presence of officers of the government to undergo strict and unpleasant penances. Those Brahmans who had assisted the pretender in his religious or ceremonial observances were excommunicated and were not readmitted to caste until many months afterwards. Raghujı Angre received as his reward a taluka worth annually a lakh of rupees.

Having disposed of Raghunathrao, his English allies and the pretender Sukhnidhan, the harassed ministers turned to face other enemies. The chief of these was Haidar Ali, but Mudhoji Bhosle and

the raja of Kolhapur had also taken advantage of the dissensions at Poona, and Nizam Ali was merely waiting on events. In 1776, Haider Ali reduced the strong fort of Gooti, the fief of Murarirao Ghorpade. On the fall of his fortress, Murarirao Ghorpade became the prisoner of Haider Ali and soon ended his days in the fort of Kabaldurg. After his success at Gooti, Haider Ali openly espoused Raghunathrao's cause and, crossing the Tungabhadra, ravaged the Maratha possessions between that river and the Kistna. To meet this southern invader the ministers sought the alliance of the treacherous Nizam Ali. The allies agreed to invade Mysore with a considerable army, while a force was sent under Konherrao Patwardhan to relieve Savanur, then beleaguered by Haider Ali. But Mahomed Ali, in command of Haider Ali's advance troops, met the relieving force at Sansi. He adopted a plan of battle that the Marathas had themselves often practised with success. He made a reconnaissance in force, followed by a pretended flight. This simple ruse led the Marathas to pursue him until they fell into an ambush and were shot down with great slaughter by concealed cannon. A vigorous charge by Mahomed Ali completed the rout, and Pandurangrao Patwardhan, the second-in-command, fell into the hands of Mahomed Ali. In the cold weather of 1776 and 1777 a Maratha army thirty thousand strong under Parashrambhu Patwardhan assembled at Miraj. An even larger force, estimated at forty thousand men and commanded by Ibrahim Beg Dhonsa, was sent by Nizam Ali. The plan of the allied governments was that they should converge on Mysore and effect a junction within the frontiers of that kingdom. But Parashrambhau Patwardhan, who was made over-cautious by the memory of Konherrao's defeat and by the condition of his army whose pay was several months in arrears, retired behind the Kistna without engaging the enemy. Ibrahim Beg, deserted by his allies, was glad to accept a present from Haider Ali's agent, and also retired behind his master's frontier. The ministers determined to make a fresh effort during the cold weather of 1777, and sent an army of sixty thousand men under the joint command of Hari Ballal Phadke and Parashrambhu Patwardhan. They had reached the Tungabhadra when they were rendered powerless by the same weapon that had secured the retreat of Ibrahim Khan. With Haider Ali was Bajirao Barve, a Konkanasth Brahman, a connexion of Raghunathrao's first wife. Barve succeeded in corrupting Manaji Sindia, surnamed Phakde, with a bribe of six lakhs of rupees. Manaji agreed to desert with ten thousand men during the first general action. As soon as they had crossed the Tungabhadra, Haider Ali attacked the Marathas. Manaji Phakde's treachery was discovered too soon to be effective, and his force, with the exception of the traitor himself and thirty horsemen, was surrounded and cut to pieces, before it could desert. Hari Phadke no longer felt strong enough to engage Haider Ali; for the more he inquired, the wider proved to be the ramifications of Manaji Sindia's treason. Even his own personal servants had been bribed to seize their master during the confusion of the battle. He arrested several of his leading officers and blew from a gun one of the most deeply implicated, Yashwantrao Mane of Mhaswad. He then

withdrew, harassed all the way, across the, Kistna. Haidar Ali reduced Kopal and invested Dharwar; but in May 1778, artfully deceived by rumours spread by Hari Phadke as to the arrival of another great army from Poona, he paid Hari Phadke a sum of money to obtain an armistice.

The submission of Kolhapur and Mudhoji Bhosle was obtained with less difficulty. Ever since the death of Sambhaji, the policy of the Kolhapur state had been to annoy its suzerain by plundering expeditions on land and piracy at sea, and by an alliance with Nizam Ali when at war with Poona. The author of this policy was the imperious Jijibai, Sambhaji's widow. In 1762, two years after her husband's death, she adopted Shivaji Bhosle, the son of Shahaji Bhosle, *patil* of Khanwat village in the Indapur taluka, and carried on the government in his name. She was alike jealous of Tarabai and hostile to Balaji Bajirao, and she showed her displeasure in the manner described. Madhavrao had punished her by taking from the Kolhapur state several districts and giving them to the Patwardhan family. On the murder of Narayanrao, Jijibai openly espoused the cause of Raghunathrao, and not only recovered the forfeited lands, but stripped the Patwardhans of others also. The ministers asked for help from Tukoji Holkar, which he refused. At last with the greatest difficulty and by offers of large grants of land in central India, Madhavrao Sindia was induced to march against Kolhapur. Before his arrival, however, Ramchandra Ganes Kanade, at the head of a body of Poona troops, had won at Hingangaon a signal victory over the Kolhapur army, commanded by Yesaji Sindia. On Madhavrao Sindia's arrival, the Peshwa's troops overran the raja's territory and then besieged Kolhapur. At last the pride of Jijibai was broken. She agreed to restore her conquests, to break her alliance with Haidar Ali and Raghunathrao, and to pay twenty lakhs by way of indemnity to the Peshwa (January 1778).

Mudhoji Bhosle was easily dealt with. Janoji Bhosle had been present at Theur when Madhavrao died, and, shortly before the great Peshwa's death, he obtained leave to adopt Raghuj, his brother Mudhoji's eldest son. After performing this important act, he went on a pilgrimage to Tuljapur, where he died in May 1773<sup>1</sup>. On his death, Mudhoji, as the natural father of Raghuj, and Sabaji as the full brother of Janoji, claimed, both with some show of right, the guardianship of the newly adopted boy. Mudhoji Bhosle after the murder of Narayanrao took the side of Raghunathrao. Sabaji took the side of the ministers and on their victory they appointed him regent of the Nagpur state. On February 26, 1775, Mudhoji and Sabaji Bhosle fought a pitched battle. Mudhoji's troops were already in full light, when their leader was so fortunate as to shoot his brother Sabaji dead. Instantly victory changed sides and the ministry aspired to recognize Mudhoji Bhosle as regent. On Raghunathrao's

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff, Vol. II, p. 9. Mr Sardesai gives the date of Janoji Bhosle's death as 29th April, 1771; but that date does not seem to fit in with the rest of the story.

flight into Gujarat Mudhoji professed himself an adherent of the ministry; but, when the English allied themselves to Raghunatirao, Mudhoji again favoured his cause. The ministry called upon Nizam Ali to punish this unstable feudatory. Nizam Ali readily agreed and sent Ibrahim Beg Dhansa, the commander bribed by Haider Ali, to invite Berar. This he did and reduced it with little or no opposition. At first Mudhoji was required to surrender his principal fortresses, but afterwards, on his abject submission and payment of a fine of ten lakhs to the Poona Government, his many treacheries were forgiven him.

The question of the Gaikwad's succession was settled by the nomination of Fatehsing on payment of ten and a half lakhs of arrears of tribute and a present of six lakhs. Of the six lakhs one lakh went to Sakharam Bapu and to Nana Phadnavis. The remaining five lakhs went into the state treasuries (February 1778).

While the ministers were thus struggling successfully to restore order throughout the Maratha state, several deaths occurred too important not to be mentioned. In July 1777, Gangabai, widow of the ill-starred Narayanrao, died of a malignant fever.<sup>1</sup> Her last act was to plead successfully for the release of Ramchandra Naik from prison. A hardly less important death was that of the unhappy Ramraja on December 12, 1778. So long as Tarabai lived, his life, at one time so full of fair promise, had been rendered miserable, but the generous-hearted Madhavrao had softened the rigours of his captivity and allowed him to move freely all over Satara fortress. He also permitted him to manage his private estates in the Poona district. Indeed he would probably have given him wider powers, had he not found Ramraja's mind no longer fit to do more than play at administration. At Madhavrao's death, Ramraja seems to have shown a momentary energy. The commandant of Raygad had betrayed his charge to the Sidi of Janjira. Ramraja, stirred by the insult to his heroic ancestor, cancelled the appointment of the commandant and pressed on the new Peshwa Narayanrao its recovery. This was

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff asserts (Vol II, p 70) that she died of a miscarriage wilfully brought about to conceal the effects of her intimacy with Nana Phadnavis. This assertion has been hotly traversed by modern Indian writers. Grant Duff does not quote any authority for it and I have not been able to find any. On the other hand Khare (*Adhikar Yog*, p. 70) quotes a contemporary letter to the following effect.—

'The Peshwa's mother Gangabai contracted *navajwar* (nine days fever). On the eighth day of the attack, namely, *Ashad Sud 7*, a little before noon she died. It is a terrible calamity. The Peshwa is very young. His mother was his protector. It is a most terrible thing to have happened.'

In this connexion too, the following extract from Grant Duff's letter to General Briggs, dated 28 February 1854, is interesting.—

'I could not now lay my hand on the notes of evidence as to the matter you mention. . . . That the ministers had several women carried up, to make sure of a successor somehow, was also generally believed, and that Nana Phadnavis was much too intimate with Narayanrao's widow, but nevertheless no one of any consequence expressed any suspicion as to the legitimacy of the child born a Poorundhar (sic).'

Grant Duff's authority seems to have been the gossip of Poona, not always a trustworthy source.

soon effected and the garrison of the Sidi put to the sword. Ramraja had two daughters, who were respectively married to Madhavji Naik Nimbalkar and Durgaji Mahadik Taralekar.<sup>1</sup> In 1777, Ramraja fell ill and he was pressed to adopt a son as he had no male issue. His choice fell on Trimbakji Bhosle, *patil* of Vavi, a village in Nasik district, which formed part of the Bhosles' private domain. Trimbakji Bhosle was descended from Vithoji, the brother of Maloji Bhosle and uncle of Shahaji, the great king's father. On the boy's adoption, his name was changed to that of Shahu Maharaj. He is known in Maratha history as *Dakhle* Shahu, or Shahu the Younger.

## CHAPTER L

### MOROBA PHADNAVIS' CONSPIRACY AND THE ENGLISH INVASION

IN Chapter XLVII, I have related how Moroba Phadnavis tried unsuccessfully to seize in Raghunathrao's interest the persons of Parvatibai, Gangabai, the young Peshwa, Sakharam Bapu and Nana Phadnavis. Moroba remained unpunished and, jealous of his cousin Nana Phadnavis, continued to plot for Raghunathrao's return. He was closely in touch with all Raghunathrao's avowed well-wishers, Bajaba Purandare, Sakharam Hari Gupte and Chinto Vithal Rairkar. Tukoji Holkar was won over to Raghunathrao's cause because of his jealousy of Madhavrao Sindia, and Sakharam Bapu because of his dislike for Nana Phadnavis. In 1778, the conspirators approached the Bombay Government and invited them to march on Poona and restore Raghunathrao. The Bombay Government, smarting under the treaty of Purandar, and indignant at the deference paid by Nana Phadnavis to St. Lubin, a French adventurer who posed as an envoy of the French king, were ready and willing to comply. The English, however, asked for a written invitation from Sakharam Bapu, which he was too wary to send. While the negotiations were proceeding, Nana Phadnavis, who was fully aware of them, tried to seize Moroba Phadnavis, who escaped arrest and took refuge in the camp of Tukoji Holkar. It was now Moroba's turn. Secure in the midst of Holkar's soldiery, he conspired with Sakharam Bapu to arrest Nana Phadnavis, but the latter artfully eluded his enemies and fled to Purandar.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar* p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> One tale of the attempted arrest of Nana Phadnavis is as follows. Sakharam Bapu and Moroba Phadnavis had concentrated troops round Poona, intending to arrest Nana Phadnavis directly the evening gun was fired. Sakharam Bapu was to keep Nana Phadnavis engaged in conversation until a few minutes before. Nana knew of the plot and warned the officer on duty not to fire the evening gun until he heard the report of five guns fired from Purandar. The result was that, after Sakharam Bapu had left, so as to allow the troops to seize Nana Phadnavis, the latter rode as fast as he could out of the city. The officer on duty did not fire the evening gun until Nana Phadnavis had reached Purandar and had fired five guns from there. The soldiers then rushed in, but their prey had escaped (Khare, *Life of Nana Phadnavis*, chapter vii.)

Thence he sent urgent letters\* to Madhavrao Sindia in front of Kolhapur, and to Hari Ballal Phadke in the Carnatic, to bring their armies to his assistance. Some delay ensued, for directly Sindia struck his camp the raja of Kolhapur showed signs of disavowing his recent treaty, and Hari Ballal Phadke could not leave the Carnatic until he had tricked Haidar Ali into asking for an armistice. In the meantime Nana Phadnavis successfully capoled Moroba. He proposed that Moroba should be minister-in-chief and that the other ministers should be Sakharam Babu, Bajaba Purandare and Nana Phadnavis. The latter's powers were to be greatly curtailed and he was to remain at Purandar in charge of the young Peshwa. Moroba accepted the proposal and assumed supreme power. But since his liking for Raghunathrao only grew out of his envy of Nana Phadnavis, he no sooner became chief minister than, as his astute cousin had foreseen, he lost all enthusiasm for the return of Raghunathrao. He broke off negotiations with the English and proceeded to rule the state himself and enjoy to the full all the fruits of office. His pleasant dream was soon disturbed. When Hari Ballal Phadke was free to leave the Carnatic, he joined Madhavrao Sindia at Miraj. Then, leaving Miraj by separate routes, they joined each other again at Purandar on June 6, 1778. Nana Phadnavis with their help was once again master of the situation, and on June 22, Hari Ballal Phadke and Parashram Chate Patwardhan surrounded Moroba's house and arrested him. He was ordered to resign all his offices, to disband his troops and to retire into private life, but he did not observe the terms imposed on him. As he was again found engaged in treasonable correspondence with the English, he was on July 22 arrested and imprisoned in Ahmadnagar fort. There he remained for twenty-two years. Two of the other ministers were treated with similar severity. Bajaba Purandare was imprisoned in Wandan fort, close to Satara. Sakharam Hari Gupte, one of the heroes of Rakhshasabhavan, was thrown heavily chained into Rudramal and afterwards removed to Ghangad, where he died fourteen months later staunch in his fidelity to his unworthy master.<sup>1</sup>

Raghunathrao and his English allies in Bombay heard with dismay of the return of Nana Phadnavis to power, but they did not abandon their intention to march on Poona. Raghunathrao was anxious to recover the Peshwa's office, and the Bombay Government feared Nana Phadnavis' designs on the island of Salsette. In August, the Bombay Government received a direct order from the Supreme Council that they were not to engage in war with the Marathas unless as a defensive measure. As the Governor-General was negotiating with Mudhoji

<sup>1</sup> I cannot resist quoting the fine passage from Grant Duff, Vol II, p 77, which describes the end of this brave man :

"He (Sakharam Hari) was chained in irons so heavy that although a very powerful man, he could scarcely lift them, his food and water were insufficient to allay his hunger or quench his thirst; but he survived fourteen months, and, when so emaciated that he could not rise. "My strength is gone and my life is going," cried the dying enthusiast; "but when voice and breath fail my fleshless bones shall still shout 'Raghunathrao! Raghunathrao'!"

Bhosle, the Bombay Government resolved to ignore the order while determined to march eastwards directly the weather permitted. They made little or no preparations for the invasion that they expected. They obtained from Raghunathrao a renewal of the treaty made by him at Surat,<sup>1</sup> and on November 22, 1778, sent six companies of sepoys and some light artillery to seize the Bhor ghat operation was successfully effected by the officer in command, James Stewart.

It is a matter of great regret that so little is known of this remarkable man. Yet such had been his gallantry on various occasions of field service that his own men had nicknamed him Ishtur Phadnis the Heroic Stewart. This honourable title had been accepted by the Peshwa's army and the Peshwa's government; and to-day no Marathi man's name is so well known to the ordinary Brahman of the Deccan or the Konkan as Ishtur Phadnis. Indeed his presence with the attacking force was regarded by them as a presage of victory and the Maratha forces as an omen of defeat. It was his duty to stand at Khandala at the head of the pass until the arrival of the main army and thus he performed with great skill, successfully defeating the detachments sent to dislodge him. On December 23, 1778, the British army arrived, three thousand nine hundred strong, accompanied by Raghunathrao, his adopted son Amratrao, and Chintu Vithal Rao who had fled to Bombay and had been appointed Raghunathrao's diwan. With Raghunathrao were two thousand cavalry and an equal body of disciplined infantry. The English commander, Colonel Egerton, who had as yet met no serious resistance, was confident of a rapid and successful end to the campaign. He was quite unaware of the vast preparations that had been made for his reception. Phadnis had for months past known the intentions of the English and so admirable was his system of espionage that the most secret debates of the Bombay Council were accurately reported to him. While the Bombay Government organized their tiny army, Phadnis had from every quarter received large contingents. Holkar was present at Poona with 6,000 men, Sindia with 1,500, Bhivrao Panse with 3,000, and other feudatories with between 500 and 6,000. These contingents together with the Peshwa's enabled him to send 40,000 men against the invaders. At the same time he removed Sakharam Bapu from office and placed under a guard of Sindia's troops. He ordered Balaji Govind Barabhai, Commandant of Sagar in central India, to resist all attempts of the Supreme Council to send reinforcements overland from Bengal. The order was so well obeyed that Colonel Leslie, who was leading an army from Bengal, was never able to pass through central India after several months of useless fighting there, died of fever on October 23, 1778.

Colonel Egerton advanced so slowly that he spent eleven days

<sup>1</sup> The new treaty was dated 24 November 1778. See Forrest, *Selapur (Maratha Series)*, Vol. I, 334-8.

<sup>2</sup> A son of Govind Bandela killed in the Panipat campaign.

marching the eight miles that separate Khandala from Karh, the little village known to residents of Bombay and Poona because of its wonderful Buddhist caves. On January 4, 1779, the English army lost its most daring spirit. According to the *Peshwa's Bakhar*, Captain Stewart climbed a tree to reconnoitre the enemy's position. His commanding figure was recognized and the entire Maratha front resounded with the cry of 'Shabash, Ishtur Phakde.' At the same time the Maratha batteries concentrated on the tree which sheltered Stewart, and a moment later the tree and its burden were swept away in a storm of cannon-shot. The same chronicle relates a curious tale how the death of the gallant Stewart was announced to the Poona ministers. While Nana Phadnavis and other ministers were seated anxiously in the little Peshwa's room, awaiting news from the front, the boy prince started from his seat and asked them why they looked so careworn. 'The English will not give way,' was the reply. The little boy sent for his toy sword, fastened it on, and said, 'The Englishman is dead.' There was only one Englishman who mattered and a few hours later a messenger brought the news that Ishtur Phakde was no more. By some strange telepathy the death of the English hero had reached the Brahman prince faster than the steed of the galloping messenger. Captain Stewart's command devolved on Captain Hartley, a brave and skilful officer, but without the inspiring qualities of the dead soldier, and the latter's death greatly depressed the invaders and cheered the defending army. On January 9, the English reached Talegaon Dadbhade, the beautiful spot which the gallant Khanderao Dadbhade loved above all his other possessions. They found it in flames and they learnt that Nana Phadnavis had ordered the destruction of Chivhad and other townships on the road to Poona and, should the English reach so far, the destruction of Poona itself. For this purpose, indeed, he had filled the rooms of the Shanwar Wada with masses of straw and hay. The English had counted on finding supplies at Talegaon, more especially since they learnt that a Maratha force had swept the Konkan as far as Pangel, cutting their communications with Bombay. Their commanders should have advanced by forced marches on Poona to prevent its destruction, for they had with them several days' supply of food and the capital was only eighteen miles away. No steps taken by Nana could in so short a time have stripped Poona bare. The English would have found supplies there and Raghunathrao numerous adherents. But from undue elation the invaders fell into uncalculated despair. They contrasted their present situation with the easier conditions of Gujarat, and they fretfully complained to Raghunathrao and Chinto Vithal that they had falsely promised the adhesion of Tukoji Holkar and other allies. Holkar had sent word that he had no intention of deserting to a force so small that its defeat was certain, and this message increased the gloom of the English high command. In spite of the protests of Raghunathrao and the advice of Captain Hartley, the English resolved to retire. At 11 p.m. on the night of January 11, the army that was to have forced Raghunathrao on an unwilling people began its retreat. The heavy guns were thrown into the tank at Talegaon, whence they were



afterwards recovered by the Marathas.<sup>1</sup> All around the English army had been stationed patrols, who at once reported the retreat of the invaders. The Marathas attacked them from all sides with greater vigour and fuller confidence. On the 12th and 13th, the English army struggled back the way it had come, but on the 13th, it was hemmed in at the village of Wadgaon, some five miles from Talegaon. The English sent a certain Farmer to negotiate. The Maratha government demanded as a preliminary to negotiations the surrender of Raghunathrao, but the latter, grasping the hopeless situation of the English, had already deserted to Sindia's camp together with Chinto Vithal Rairikar and Kharaksingh, one of Narayanrao's murderers, and three hundred cavalry, some fifteen hundred disciplined infantry and thirteen pieces of artillery. Sindia received Raghunathrao with courtesy, but arrested Chinto Vithal and Kharaksingh. The Maratha government next demanded the cession of Salsette and the acquisitions of the East India Company in Surat and Broach. The English commanders at first demurred on the ground that they had no authority to make such cessions, but afterwards they sent Holmes, a junior member of the Civil Service, with full power to agree to their enemies' demands. He ceded all that the East India Company had acquired in the Konkan since 1773, bestowed privately the English share in Broach on Madhavrao Sindia and promised Rs. 41,000 to various members of his staff. At the same time he undertook to countermand the advance of reinforcements from Bengal. The English army was then allowed to return unmolested to Bombay, but Farmer and Lieutenant Charles Stewart, a nephew of the gallant Ishtur Phakde, remained behind as hostages.

On the arrival of the troops at Bombay, the Bombay Government repudiated the convention of Wadgaon as made wholly without authority and dismissed the officers who were parties to it. The Bengal Supreme Council directed General Goddard, the successor of Colonel Leslie, to march with all speed to the western coast. This duty General Goddard performed with consummate skill, disregarding the countermand received from Bombay. On February 26, 1780 he reached Surat, evading twenty thousand Maratha horse sent to intercept him. From Surat he took ship to Bombay.

The Maratha army remained encamped at Talegaon for a month, and the Maratha government were extremely annoyed at the repudiation by the Bombay Government of the convention of Wadgaon, a repudiation which robbed them of the fruits of their victory. Nevertheless they treated Farmer and Stewart, with kindness and courtesy, probably out of affectionate admiration for Ishtur Phakde, and devoted themselves to the uprooting of sedition at home. Sakharam Bapu had been allowed to go to Wai to celebrate the

<sup>1</sup> A letter from Shivajipant quoted by Khare (*Adhikar Yog*, p. 125) runs as follows:

'The English have been beaten. They have lost from 400 to 500 men killed. Seven cannon have been taken and two thousand muskets, etc., are included in the booty.'

marriage of his daughter with the *Pant Sachiv*; in his absence Sindia extorted from Chinto Vithal two similarly worded letters written by Sakharam Babu to Chinto Vithal and Raghunathrao<sup>1</sup>. They clearly proved his treachery and on his return from Wai he was arrested and imprisoned in Sinhgad. Kharaksingh was executed and Chinto Vithal ended his days in a hill fortress. The real culprit, however, escaped.

After some sharp discussion between Sindia and Nana Phadnavas, the Maratha government agreed to let the former keep Raghunathrao in his custody at Jhansi and to allot to Madhavrao Sindia lands worth four to five lakhs a year, so that the pretender might be suitably lodged and attended. Raghunathrao was allowed to march towards Jhansi with the cavalry and infantry that had gone over with him to Sindia's camp. To watch his movements Sindia detailed one of his staff, Hari Babaji with two thousand men. On the road Raghunathrao learnt that Sindia had no intention of spending the revenues allotted to him to enhance Raghunathrao's dignity and comfort. He meant on arrival at Jhansi to shut up the fugitive in Jhansi fort and to brigade his troops with his own army. To this fate Raghunathrao was determined not to submit. In the confusion of crossing the Narbada, he attacked Hari Babaji's two thousand men, cut them to pieces and escaped to broach, where he was received with honour by his English friends.

The victory over the English was deemed a fitting occasion for the Peshwa's *Mum*, or thread-girding ceremony<sup>2</sup>. The Peshwa was now in his sixth year and on May 12 the ceremonial festivities began. Hitherto Madhavrao through fear of Raghunathrao's various plots had always been kept in Purandar or Saswad. He was now taken to Poona and he was admitted to the dignity of the twice-born. All the feudatories including Sindia and Holkar were present and the whole countryside was white with the tents of the visitors and of their military escorts. The ceremonies were splendid, but were not unduly prolonged, as Nana Phadnavas guessed that in no long time the Marathas and English would be again at war.

## CHAPTER LI

### RENEWAL OF THE ENGLISH WAR

WARREN HASTINGS, the Governor-General of Bengal, was determined to wipe out the disgrace of Wadgaon. He directed Goddard to take supreme command of all troops in Bombay and if possible to restore the credit of the English arms. On the other hand, Nana Phadnavas entered into an alliance with Haidar Ali and Nizam Ali. After some fruitless negotiations General Goddard resolved to conduct the war in Gujarat rather than in Maharashtra. In Gujarat he hoped to

<sup>1</sup> The letters ran as follows: 'This is my request. I have made the suggestion to the south (i.e. to Haidar Ali). I am now sitting down and waiting on events. In these circumstances the sooner you act the better.' (*Adhikar Yog*, p. 128.)

<sup>2</sup> See chapter, xxv.

receive help from Fatehsing Gaikwad; Surat, too, formed a convenient base, while the Maratha armies would necessarily be hampered by long and arduous land communications. In January 1780, Goddard's army moved from Surat. On January 20, 1780, he took by storm Dabhai and occupied other towns garrisoned in the Peshwa's interest. On January 26, he signed an offensive and defensive alliance with Fatehsing. Agreeably to the treaty, he laid siege to Ahmadabad, which he took by storm on February 15, 1780. The Maratha government had called on Sindia and Holkar to drive out the invaders, and, crossing the Narbada on February 29, they halted near Baroda with twenty thousand cavalry. On March 6, Goddard crossed the Mahi river and offered them battle; but the Marathas retreated after chivalrous, releasing Farmer and Stewart. Some time passed in idle negotiations; at last Goddard, on the night of April 2, surprised Sindia's camp without, however, inflicting on him any serious loss.

Madhavrao Sindia's strategy in refusing a general action was essentially sound. He wished to draw Goddard farther and farther from his base, while the Poona government acted against Surat and Bombay. In March 1780, Ganeshpant Behare, the Peshwa's commander in the northern Konkan, invaded Guzarat, intending to cut Goddard's communications with Surat. Goddard was forced to send a detachment under Lieutenant Welsh, who surprised, defeated and wounded Ganeshpant Behare,<sup>1</sup> and thereupon reduced the three forts of Parner, Bagwada and Indragad. About the same time one of Sindia's detachments was surprised on the banks of the Narbada. Nevertheless Sindia's strategy was justified elsewhere; for in the Konkan the Marathas won an important success. An English

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff writes that Ganeshpant Behare was mortally wounded. This is not correct. Four years later Ganeshpant Behare was fighting against Tippu Sultan. It is interesting to contrast the English and Maratha accounts of this action.

The following is Welsh's account

DEAR SIR,

I have the pleasure to acquaint you that I rode on at the head of the regiment and Candahars and reached Ganes Pant's camp at four o'clock this morning, when I took his camp standing, bazar and three guns, killed ninety and wounded fifteen. I have only lost one daffedar and two troopers wounded, one Candahar killed. In short there was nothing wanting to complete this matter, but sending you in Ganes Pant's head, I don't think he has much to brag of now. The inhabitants of the village seem exceedingly happy and are coming in from all quarters

I am, Dear Sir,

Your very obedient humble servant

Thomas Welsh

The following is an extract from a letter written by Nana Phadnavis

'The English surprised Ganespant Behare. A slight action followed. The said officer received two or three wounds. He made a careful retreat to Hatgad.'

(*Parasnis Collection*).

detachment, which under Ensign Fyfe had pushed rather rashly as far as the ghats, was cut off and its guns taken; and a Maratha assault on an English post at Kalyan on May 24, 1780, was only just frustrated by the arrival of a relief force under Colonel Hartley.

In the meantime the skill of Nana Phadnavis' diplomacy was soon to become manifest to the English of Madras. The government of that city had succeeded in estranging at the same time Haidar Ali and the Nizam. In spite of their offensive and defensive alliance with the former, the Madras Government had refused to send him any help against the Marathas and had, without his permission, recently marched an armed force through his territories. They had enraged Nizam Ali by occupying his district, Guntur, and by binding themselves to support against him his brother Basalat Jang. Both princes, therefore, listened readily to Nana Phadnavis' overtures. To Haidar Ali Nana Phadnavis offered to cede all the lands actually occupied by his troops between the Kistna and Tungabhadra rivers. To Nizam Ali he offered important tracts of land between Daulatabad and Ahmadnagar. Nana Phadnavis' offers were accepted, and both Haidar Ali and Nizam Ali allied themselves with the Marathas against the English. Nizam Ali's help was of little value, for on the restitution of Guntur he refused to move a man, but Haidar Ali's attack on the English was of the most formidable kind. In July 1780, eighty-three thousand disciplined troops, led in many cases by gallant French adventurers, assembled suddenly at Bangalore. Without a word of warning this mighty force poured through the southern passes into the English possessions. The first news of the invasion was conveyed to the Madras Government by the sight of flaming villages nine miles from Madras. Isolating that capital, Haidar Ali sought out the English armed forces. On September 10 he fell upon a body of 3,700 men under Colonel Baillie, and destroyed or captured the entire detachment.

Fortunately for English dominion in India, Warren Hastings was Governor-General in Calcutta. He heard of the disasters with unruffled calm and met the confederacy with its own weapons. He formed an alliance with the rana of Gohad in central India, who was a subject ally of the Peshwa. The rana of Gohad declared himself independent and received Captain Popham with three thousand men, horse and guns. The combined forces crossed the Jamna and, routing the Maratha covering troops, took successively the forts of Lahar and Gwalior (August 4, 1780), thus seriously disquieting Madhavrao Sindia, to whom Gwalior belonged. To meet the dangers that threatened Madras, Warren Hastings despatched Sir Eyre Coote, who, although sixty years of age, proved able to check the impetuous advance of Haidar Ali.

The monsoon, which falls with intense violence in the Konkan, checked operations until October, when Colonel Goddard, leaving a considerable garrison in Surat, Broach and Ahmadabad, began to march southwards from Surat to invest Bassein. On October 1, Colonel Hartley, who had been sent from Bombay to prepare for the arrival of the main army, took by storm Bawa Malang, known familiarly as the Cathedral Rock, ten miles south of Kalyan. It had

been unsuccessfully attacked on August 4, but now fell into the hands of the English. On November 13, General Goddard arrived before Bassein and carefully reconnoitred it. On November 28, the siege began. The Maratha government strained every nerve to relieve Bassein, but the invasion of central India partially paralysed Sindia, whose guns failed to arrive in time. On the other hand, contingents under Parashrambhai Patwardhan and Anandrao Raste<sup>1</sup> were at once placed at the disposal of Ramchandra Ganesh. He successfully harassed Colonel Hartley's covering force and compelled it to move from its advanced post and to fall back on Goddard's besieging army. On December 10, Ramchandra Ganesh made a most resolute attempt to destroy Hartley's corps. Throughout the 10th and 11th his attacks continued without abating. At last, at 9 a.m. on December 12, 1780, Ramchandra Ganesh, taking advantage of a thick fog, tried to surprise an eminence on Hartley's right flank. Had he carried it, he would probably have been able to drive Hartley from his camp. The scheme failed through no fault of the Maratha captain. As the Maratha vanguard neared the English outposts, the fog suddenly cleared away, destroying all hopes of a surprise. The outposts fired rapidly and were so fortunate as to kill Ramchandra Ganesh and to wound his second-in-command, a Portuguese mercenary officer named Noronha. The Maratha troops, dispirited at the loss of their leaders, broke off the action and retired. In the meantime Bassein had surrendered. The siege had not been a long one. Early on December 9, the English had opened fire from their batteries and had continued it without intermission during December 9 and 10. At 10 a.m. on the 11th a message came from the garrison offering its surrender, but the city held out until the following day, when the garrison, four thousand in number, marched out, laid down their arms and were allowed to depart unmolested. The inhabitants were allowed to retain their private property, but all public property was appropriated by the English. The rapidity with which they took the famous stronghold was due to two causes, namely, the excellence of their artillery, which not only destroyed the Maratha defences but blew up their powder magazines, and the skilful dispositions of their engineer, Captain Theobald<sup>2</sup>. The English losses were only twelve killed and wounded.

The fall of Bassein and the repulse and death of the gallant

<sup>1</sup> The original family name of the Rastes was Gokhale, and the founder of the family was Gaugadharpant Gokhale, a money-lender of Velneswar in the Ratnagiri district. He and his descendants earned the name of Rasade through furnishing *rasad*, or supplies, to the Bijapur troops. The family had a great reputation for honest dealing, and Shamji Rasade was invited by King Shahu to settle at Satara as an army contractor. There, the king, highly pleased with him, changed his name from Rasade to Raste, or the Honest Man. Shamji Raste's grand-daughter was Gopikabai, the wife of the third Peshwa, Balaji Bajirao.

<sup>2</sup> A full account of the capture of Bassein is given in General Goddard's despatch of 12th December 1780, printed in Forrest, *Selections* (Marathi Series). Vol. 1, pp. 430-2.

Ramchandra Ganesh were deeply felt by Nana Phadnavis. Bassein was highly prized by the Maratha government in memory of the great siege and of the gallant exploits of the noble Chimnaji Appa. Kalyan and the surrounding country were the scenes of the earliest deeds of an even more splendid hero, the great king himself. Nevertheless the minister's lofty mind learnt the disasters without dismay, and he and Hari Ballal Phadke employed every means to raise funds and to increase their armies. Warren Hastings begged Mudhoji Bhosle to forward to the Poona government terms of peace, but to Mudhoji's letter Nana Phadnavis returned no answer. On January 18, 1781, General Goddard took the fort of Arnala, a small island off Bassein, together with the garrison of five hundred men. General Goddard then sent direct to Nana Phadnavis Warren Hastings' offer of peace, which the minister firmly declined. At the same time he took steps for the destruction of the English army. He sent the Peshwa to Purandar and Parashrambhau Patwardhan into the Konkan to cut the English lines of communication. At the head of a great army and accompanied by Hari Ballal Phadke and Tukoji Holkar, he marched up the Indrayani valley to meet Goddard. The calm energy of the minister soon obtained the desired result. On March 16, Parashrambhau at Chaul, a village immediately below Mathuran, fell suddenly on a detachment under Mackay, that was returning from Panwel, and inflicted on it heavy loss. Mackay succeeded in reaching the main army, but the gravity of the danger determined Goddard to fall back from the Sahyadris to Panwel. Before he could effect this manoeuvre, a second detachment under Colonel Browne was fiercely attacked by Parashrambhau.<sup>1</sup> On April 1, three battalions of sepoys, ten guns and a large body of horse left the main army for Panwel to bring back a big convoy of grain and stores. On the journey they were repeatedly attacked and lost one hundred and six men killed and wounded, several thousand bullocks, several hundred muskets and quantities of stores. They were indeed only saved from annihilation by the garrison of Bombay, who hastened to their relief and succeeded in bringing them in safe. On April 19, General Goddard, finding his position no longer tenable, decided to retreat. From that moment his misfortunes began. On April 20, Hari Ballal Phadke, swooping down

<sup>1</sup> Nana Phadnavis thus describes this action.

'On the night of the third Rabi-lakar, four battalions with guns and other warlike material started well-armed for Panwel to bring supplies. Parashrambhau, who had received information, attacked the same night and immediately an action followed. The Pindharies were close by. About a hundred or a hundred and fifty of the enemy were killed and about two hundred wounded. From three hundred to four hundred muskets, ten to twelve camel-cart loads of ammunition, tents of various kinds, and four thousand to five thousand bullocks, were carried off. At daybreak they (the English) halted near Barwai in a difficult position. On the following night, when they commenced to march, they were again attacked by Parashrambhau and from fifty to a hundred were killed. A thousand bullocks were captured. We fired rockets which exploded their ammunition and burnt several of their men. That very night they retreated to Panwel.'

from the heights of the Sahyadris, carried off a quantity of his baggage and ammunition. The English camped at Chauk and on April 21 fought their way to Khalapur. On the 22nd, the dispirited army rested and on the 23rd renewed the march. Harassed all day, they contrived that evening to reach Panvel after losing four hundred and fifty-six in killed and wounded, of whom eighteen were English officers. The Maratha government had thus cleared the Konkan of the English, and by a series of successes had restored the morale of their own army. Nana Phadnavis had every ground to hope that in the following cold weather a combined attack on the English, both in Bombay and Bengal, would compel them to accept peace on his terms. Unhappily for the Maratha cause, before the monsoon of 1781 had passed, both Madhavrao Sindia and Mudhoji Bhosle, on whose active aid the minister counted, had made separate treaties with the English.

The reason for Madhavrao Sindia's defection was due to the defeats suffered by him in central India. Captain Popham, after taking Gwalior, cleared the Gohad territories of the Marathas. At the same time another force under Colonel Carnac took Sipri and on February 16, 1781, appeared before Seronj. Here Colonel Carnac was heavily attacked and surrounded by Sindia. He managed to extricate himself, and on March 24 surprised and defeated Sindia's army by a skilfully prepared night-attack. Thereafter during the rainy season he occupied Sindia's lands and so wasted them that on October 13, 1781, Sindia bound himself not only to remain neutral, but also to negotiate, if possible, a peace between the English and the Poona government. About the same time Mudhoji Bhosle was detached from the Maratha confederacy by the promise of a considerable sum in cash and of assistance in acquiring the districts of Karra and Mandela, which had been in the possession of the Peshwa's officers since the campaign of Balaji Bajirao in 1742. After these diplomatic achievements, the English deputed first Captain Weatherstone and afterwards Mr. David Anderson to negotiate a peace with the Poona government. Sindia pressed also on Nana Phadnavis the advantage of accepting the English offers. The news, too, from his ally in the south was not such as to encourage the minister. During the monsoon of 1781, Haidar Ali had been repeatedly beaten by Sir Eyre Coote—at Porto Novo in July, at Pollilore in August, and at Sholingur in September. At last on May 17, 1782, was concluded the treaty of Salbai. By its terms the English undertook no longer to support Raghunathrao, who was to reside in Sindia's dominions and to receive a maintenance of twenty-five thousand rupees a month. The Peshwa was to form no alliance with the French or any other European nation hostile to the English. He was also to compel Haidar Ali to restore his conquests from the English and the nawab of Arcot. The English were to retain Salsette, but to restore all other conquests since the treaty of Purandar. Ahmadabad and other possessions of the Gaikwad were to be restored to Fatehsing, who was to pay the usual tribute to Poona. Lastly, Broach was bestowed on Madhavrao Sindia as a reward for his conduct at Wadgaon and for his treatment of Farmer and

Stewart<sup>1</sup> The treaty of Salbai extinguished the last hopes of Raghunathrao. That unfortunate pretender accepted, because he could do nothing else, the terms of the treaty. He chose, as the spot wherein to end his days, Kopargaon on the banks of the beautiful Godavari river. Thither he went accompanied by his wife, Anandibai, to whose furious ambition he owed his many misfortunes. With them went also their adopted son Amratrao and their real son Bajirao, for whom fate was preparing adventures hardly less romantic than those of his father. By the sacred stream Raghunathrao affected to become a *sanyasi*. But the son of the great Bajirao could not control his thoughts. They strayed from battle-fields by the Indus to leaguers in the Carnatic and his enforced idleness sapped his strength. On February 24, 1784, eleven months after the formal exchange of the treaty of Salbai, Raghunathrao died. In the course of the year 1784, his widow gave birth to a posthumous son, Chhinnaji Appa. Nana Phadnavis treated the family with kindness, but the beautiful widow never forgave one whom she regarded as the cause of her husband's failures, and she brought up her son Bajirao to look upon Nana Phadnavis with a hatred so malignant, that to avenge his father he was ready to ruin his country.

English historians, notably Vincent Smith, have written of the treaty of Salbai with well-founded pride; for on three fronts against superior forces the genius of Warren Hastings and the valour of his soldiers yielded nothing to the enemy. Nevertheless the real honours of the war lay, not with the English, but with the great man who controlled the Maratha empire. The war was waged to decide whether Raghunathrao or Savai Madhavrao should sit in the seat of the Peshwas.

The treaty of Salbai not only settled the succession in favour of Savai Madhavrao, but yielded Raghunathrao into the hands of his rival. Thus in spite of dissensions at home, faithless friends and treacherous allies, Nana Phadnavis reached his goal. His serene but enduring spirit accepted victory without insolence, and defeat without despair, from the barren plains of the Deccan and the wild hills of the Konkan his tireless energy raised ever new armies and fresh resources, until at last he wore out the patience of the English, led them to surrender their conquests and won the strategic victory, which alone he sought, namely, the throne of Poona for the boy prince entrusted to his devoted care.

<sup>1</sup> The treaty of Salbai was concluded on May 17, 1782, was ratified on June 6, 1782, and was formally exchanged on February 24, 1783.

The following letter from Tukoji Holkar to Nana Phadnavis mentions the death of Raghunathrao. '(After compliments) Please continue to communicate your news and be so good as to receive mine. I received your letter and was deeply grieved to hear the news of Shrimat Dada Sahib's (i.e. Raghunathrao's) death on Thursday the 3rd of the dark half of *Margashirsh* at about six *ghattis* after sunset. He was ill for some time. But he had recovered his strength. None can go against destiny. The will of God prevails. We were glad to hear that you have sent Visaji Appaji to condole with Anandibai and her son Shrimant Bajirao. What more shall I say? Be kind.'



## CHAPTER LII 4

### WARS AGAINST TIPU

BEFORE the treaty of Salbai had been finally exchanged between the contracting parties, the great Haidar Ali had died of cancer in the back on December 7, 1782. His son and successor Tipu had inherited some of his splendid talents and all his savage qualities. He derived his unusual name from the shrine of Tipu Mastan Aulia, whither his mother Fakrunnissa had, to obtain a blessing, gone shortly before her delivery. He was now in the full vigour of his faculties, and one of his first acts was, in March 1784, to outwit the English of Madras and to obtain from them the treaty of Mangalore. Thereby the English agreed to restore to Tipu all the places they had recently conquered, thus nullifying the clause in the treaty of Salbai which bound the Marathas to help to recover the provinces seized by Haidar Ali from the nawab of Arcot. Another cause of war, however, between the Marathas and Tipu, was soon forthcoming.

Among the Maratha chiefs who held lands between the Kistna and the Tungabhadra rivers was a Chitpavan Brahman named Bhave, who was *desai* of Nargund. As the price of his alliance, Haidar Ali had asked for and obtained from the Marathas the cession of all the territories between the two rivers. He thus included Nargund in his dominions. The *desai* had submitted and Haidar Ali had fixed his dues at the same figure as those paid by him to the Peshwa. Tipu, who wished to confiscate the Chitpavan's holding, raised his tribute to a larger sum than he could pay. Bhave appealed to Nana Phadnavis, who represented with justice to Tipu that the transfer of the Peshwa's rights between the two rivers left all other rights unaffected. The *desai*, therefore, was not bound to pay more to Tipu than he had paid to Poona. Tipu replied discourteously that from his own subjects he could levy what he chose. And in March, 1785, he sent a force to reduce Nargund. Nana Phadnavis sent to the relief of Nargund a body of troops under Ganeshpant Behare and Parashrambhu Patwardhan. But Burhan-ud-din, the officer in command of the besieging army, raised the siege and advanced to meet the Marathas. After some desultory fighting in which the Mysore troops had the advantage, Burhan-ud-din, on May 5, 1785, carried the fort of Ramdurg, a position of great importance for the continuance of the siege of Nargund. Nana Phadnavis ordered Tukoji Holkar to march at once to reinforce Parashrambhu. Tipu had resort to artifice and expressed himself anxious for peace. Nana was for once deceived. On the promise of two years' tribute he made peace with Tipu, who bound himself to accept from the *desai* of Nargund the same tribute as Haidar Ali had done. But as soon as the Maratha armies had re-crossed the Kistna, Tipu renewed his preposterous demands on the *desai*, and his siege operations. The unfortunate *desai* resisted as best he could, but he was soon reduced to despair. Before he surrendered he asked for Tipu's personal guarantee that no harm would come to him; which was readily granted. When

Bhave descended from the fort, the unprincipled adventurer denied his oath and seized him and his family. One daughter he selected for his harem. The rest he sent to the fort of Kabaldurg, where they died in prison. Shortly afterwards Tipu by similar treachery made himself master of Kittur, a town twenty-six miles south-east of Belgaum; and to crown his iniquities he failed to pay the promised tribute and circumcised large numbers of the Hindu population between the Kistna and the Tungabhadra. Nana Phadnavis was alike angry at the faithlessness of Tipu and shocked at his treatment of the Hindus, two thousand of whom committed suicide to escape conversion to Islam. At the same time he was aware of the excellent discipline of Tipu's battalions, often commanded by French officers, and he hesitated to attack him until reinforced by English and Moghul contingents. The English declined the alliance. Nizam Ali, who was deeply offended at Tipu's recent assumption of the title of sultan, promised his support. And the allies undertook to reduce Tipu's kingdom entirely and divide it between Nizam Ali, the Peshwa, Sindia and Holkar. In April 1786, the confederate army converged on Badami, now a village in the Bijapur district. On May 20, Badami was brilliantly carried by assault. In the meantime Tipu had laid siege to Adoni, wherein lived the ladies of the seraglio of Basalat Jang, who had died in 1782. He failed, however, to carry it, and the garrison was relieved and the fort evacuated. Tipu razed it to the ground. Hari Ballal Phadke, in command of the Poona corps, obtained possession of the fort of Gajendragad, now a town in the Ron taluka of Dharwar, by bribing the commandant, and shortly afterwards took Bahadur Benda. This, however, was his last success. Tipu, who was a skilful general and enjoyed the immense advantage of an undivided command, crossed the Tungabhadra and threatened Phadke's communications. In this way he forced the Maratha army to retire, and recovered Bahadur Benda and seized Savanur, the nawab of which had joined the Marathas. Cholera, too, broke out in the Maratha army and their supplies ran short. On the whole the advantages of the campaign of 1786 rested with Tipu. Nevertheless, early in 1787, the sultan offered terms of peace, and in April 1787, he agreed to cede to the Marathas Badami, Kittur and Nargund, and to restore Adoni to the Nizam. He also paid to the Marathas thirty lakhs in cash and promised to pay fifteen lakhs more. The motive for conduct so unexpected was to be found in certain other designs of the sultan of Mysore. The Marathas he disliked as rivals, but he neither feared them nor the Nizam of Hyderabad. There was, however, one power that he both hated and feared, namely the English; and for some time past he had been engaged in diplomatic schemes to bring about their downfall. He had extorted from the foolishness of the Madras Government the peace of Mangalore in 1784; but he was too sensible not to realize that its favourable terms did not represent the real situation of the parties. In 1785, he sent an embassy to Constantinople to induce the sultan of Turkey to join him and the French, in a league against the English. As the sultan of Turkey had never even heard of Mysore, his reception of the envoys was more than chilling.

and they returned to India in a fury. Nothing daunted, Tipu sent an embassy under one Mahomed Darwash Khan to the court of Louis XVI. That unfortunate monarch had so many troubles of his own, that he could do no more than give the ambassadors a few excellent dinners and a few vague but gracious promises. The envoys, however, returned dazzled by the splendour of Versailles and assured the sultan that troops and supplies would soon reach him from France. Tipu believed their assurances and looked about for the most convenient spot at which to receive the French transports. This was unquestionably the extreme south-west of India. It was in the possession of the raja of Travancore, and Travancore was under the protection of the Madras Government; but Tipu hoped to be able to subdue Travancore and at the same time cajole the members of the Madras Council, of whose weakness and timidity he had already had a gratifying experience. On December 28, 1789, Tipu with fourteen thousand men appeared before the Travancore lines, a series of fortifications thirty miles long erected originally to protect Travancore from the Zamorin of Calcut. Tipu hoped to carry them by a sudden assault and to overrun all Travancore before the English could intervene to save their feudatory. Unhappily for his schemes, his assault was repulsed with a loss of two thousand men. The news reached Calcutta and the Governor treated the unprovoked attack on his ally as an act of war.

In December 1787, Nana Phadnavis had proposed, through Malet, the English ambassador, an offensive and defensive alliance against Tipu; but at that time, as I have said, Lord Cornwallis was not disposed to accept the offer. Nana Phadnavis, on hearing of Tipu's attack on the Travancore lines, renewed his proposal and undertook to obtain Nizam Ali's adhesion to a triple alliance. On June 1, 1790, Malet, on behalf of the Company, and Nana Phadnavis, on behalf of both the Peshwa and Nizam Ali, signed an offensive and defensive treaty of alliance in the Shanwar palace<sup>1</sup>. A painting in the Ganeshkhind palace of the Governor of Bombay still commemorates this brilliant scene. It is by the artist Wales, and portrays the signing of the treaty by the British envoy.

In the meantime, Tipu had been continuing his attacks on Travancore. Smarting from his repulse before the Travancore lines, he sent for a train of siege guns from Seringapatam, and recommenced the campaign. The batteries were erected in March 1790, and a month later the Mysore armies, having breached the lines, poured through the breach and carried fire and sword through the northern part of the state. Near Alwai, however, Tipu was checked by the skill of the Diwan Kesava Pillai, who kept the sultan at bay until the monsoon broke with the severity usual on the Malabar coast. Tipu had failed in his object, which was to overrun Travancore and get a firm hold on the south-western coast before the rainy season; and, realizing that he must soon face a combined attack from the Moghuls, Marathas and English, he withdrew his army north-

<sup>1</sup> For the terms of the treaty see Appendix.

wards, losing heavily in his retreat. He thus had lost the prize and had now to suffer the punishment of his unprincipled policy (June, 1790).

The object of the Maratha government was to recover their former possessions between the Kistna and the Tungabhadra rivers, which Haidar Ali had occupied. The capital of the province was Dharwar, and to take that city was the first object of the Marathas. On August 11, the Maratha army under Parashrambhau Patwardhan crossed the Kistna. When the various contingents had reported their arrival, their numbers rose to twenty thousand men, of which half were cavalry. With them was an English corps consisting of the 8th and 11th Indian infantry and one company of European artillery under the command of Captain Little. On September 18, 1790, Parashrambhau reached Dharwar. It was strongly held by an experienced officer of Tipu, named Badar-ul-zaman, and a garrison of ten thousand men, and its defences were of the strongest. Two ditches, each twenty-five to thirty feet wide, encircled it, and a minor fort known as the Peta enfiladed the approaches. On October 30, 1790, Captain Little stormed the Peta, but it was afterwards retaken by a sally of the garrison. Finally, on December 15, it was taken and held by a Maratha storming party. Nevertheless the main fortress defied the besiegers for twenty-nine weeks and it was not until April 4, 1791, that the gallant Badar-ul-zaman capitulated. He was allowed to march out with the honours of war, but was subsequently taken prisoner with his men for having broken the terms of his capitulation. After the fall of Dharwar the Maratha army rapidly overran the province of which it was the chief town, and on April 22, 1791, crossed the Tungabhadra. Another Maratha army thirty thousand strong had on January 1, 1791, left Poona under the command of Hari Ballal Phadke. This force took the fortress of Sira and marched south-west into Tipu's country, while Parashrambhau marched south-east. On May 24, 1791, they united and marched to Mailghat.

In the meantime the English had been heavily engaged with Tipu. In December, 1790, General Medows had reduced Coimbatore, but had been foiled by the Sultan's military skill and had advanced no farther. On the other hand Colonel Hartley and General Abercromby defeated Tipu's general, Hussein Ali, and drove his troops from the entire Malabar coast. In January 1791, Lord Cornwallis, the Governor-General, personally relieved General Medows of his command and, taking Kolar and Hosakot, marched on Bangalore. This city has now a population of 180,000 and is the second city in the Mysore state; while owing to the salubrity of its climate, it is a great favourite with European residents. It was originally a mud fortress built by Kempe Gauda, or the Red Chief; but in 1761 it was by order of Haidar Ali enlarged and strongly rebuilt in stone. After a stubborn defence by the commandant, Bahadur Khan, the town fell on the night of March 20, 1791. From Bangalore, Lord Cornwallis marched to Seringapatam. After a successful action outside the great fortress, fortune turned against the English general. His cattle died for want of fodder; his communications had been cut and his starving troops were unable to haul the guns of which the bullocks had died. At last

Lord Cornwallis abandoned all hope of a successful siege. He destroyed his siege train, threw his shot into the Cauveri river and on May 26, 1791, retreated towards Bangalore. As his army marched, the monsoon burst and, harassed as they were by Tipu's irregulars, their situation grew worse and worse. At last they came in sight of Mailghat. As they drew near to the town swarms of light cavalry poured from the gates. Thinking that they had fallen into an ambush, the English stood to their arms, resolved, if they could not cut their way through, to die where they stood. When the leading squadrons came within gunshot, they declared themselves to be friends and allies. They were the cavalry of the two Maratha armies, of whose vicinity—such was the activity of the Mysore light horse—Lord Cornwallis had been unaware. The English army were now as elated as they had a few minutes before been dispirited, and Hari Ballal Phadke did all in his power to alleviate the distress of his allies.<sup>1</sup>

The united armies halted for ten days to allow the English soldiers to recover their health and strength, and then again moved in different directions. The Marathas besieged Chitaldurg and Madgiri without success but in December reduced Simoga. The English joined the Moghul army, that was in vain besieging Gurrampkonda, and took all the strong places between that fortress and Bangalore. In February 1792, the armies of the three allies concentrated in front of Seringapatam. On February 6, the allies carried the outworks and prepared to bombard the capital. At this point Tipu made overtures for peace. There were several conflicting interests in the councils of the allies. The English wished to destroy Tipu's power, which had been usurped by his father and had been a constant menace to the Madras Government. Nana Phadnavis desired to reduce Tipu's power, but at the same time to maintain him at Seringapatam. Hari Ballal Phadke wished to finish the war before the arrival of Madhavrao Sindia, who was advancing south to join the allied confederate forces. Eventually Lord Cornwallis was induced to accept the terms offered by Tipu, who ceded half his territories, and agreed to pay an indemnity of three crores and thirty thousand rupees and to release all prisoners. The ceded territories included the province of Coorg. The allies divided the spoils. To the Marathas fell the western towns and districts between the Kistna and the Tungabhadra, and also Bellary south of the Tungabhadra. To the Nizam were allotted Gooti and Kadapa and the eastern towns and districts between the Tungabhadra and the Kistna, including Mudkal and Kopāl. Coorg, Malabar, Dindigul (now included in the Madura district), and Baramahal, the north-eastern portion of the Salem district, passed into the hands of the English. By the end of March 1792, the allied armies struck their camps and started separately for their frontiers. Hari Ballal Phadke reached Poona on May 25. But Tipu showed his ingratitude by harassing Parashrambhau all the way from Seringapatam to the Tungabhadra.

<sup>1</sup> The distress must have been considerable; for the author of the *Peshwa's bakhar* observes, "Such was the scarcity of food that the English had been forced to eat cattle and, so it is said, even children."

## CHAPTER LIII

### CAREER AND DEATH OF MADHAVRAO SINDIA

FROM the treaty of Salbai onwards, the rulers of the Sindia family have been independent princes. Nevertheless, for the proper grasp of subsequent events, it is necessary briefly to sketch the story of Madhavrao Sindia from the point where we left the affairs of Delhi in Chapter XLII.

On the recall of Visaji Krishna and the Maratha army in 1773, by Narayanrao for the conquest of Mysore, Najaf Khan regained his supreme position in the emperor's councils and with occasional intervals retained it until his death on April 22, 1782. His adopted son Afrasiab Khan succeeded him as *Amur-ul-Umra*, the premier noble; but from this favoured position he was ousted by one Mahomed Beg Hamadani, the governor of the Agra province. Afrasiab Khan invited the help of Madhavrao Sindia. The latter accepted the invitation and joined Afrasiab Khan at Agra. There Afrasiab Khan was assassinated, and Madhavrao Sindia removed Mahomed Beg Hamadani by sending him to reduce the fortress of Raghogad in Khechivara. It belonged to the Kechi clan of the Chauhan Rajputs, who claimed descent from the immortal Prithvi Raj, and it blocked the way from Gwalior to Delhi. In this way the Maratha chief became the first power in the imperial city. He refused the title of *Amur-ul-Umra*, but accepted on the Peshwa's behalf that of *Vakil-ul-Mutalik*, or Sole Director of the Empire. Shah Alam resigned into his hands the command of his army and all his territories, namely, the district and town of Delhi. In return Sindia settled sixty-five thousand rupees a month on the emperor, over whom he stationed a Maratha guard.

Unhappily Sindia's resources were not equal to his ambitions. He soon found that he could pay regularly neither the emperor nor his own troops. To find money he confiscated the feudal estates of a number of Musulman feudatories and tried to exact tribute in the emperor's name from the chiefs of Rajputana. He succeeded in obtaining in person a considerable sum from the raja of Jaipur; but when in 1787 he sent a Maratha officer, known as Rayaji Patil, to collect a further sum, the latter was attacked and defeated. Madhavrao Sindia marched in person against Jaipur, but the raja of Jodhpur hastened to his brother Rajput's help. Next Mahomed Beg Hamadani, who had joined Sindia after the capture of Raghogad, deserted to the enemy and in the severe action that followed, Sindia was overwhelmed and eventually pursued as far as Gwalior. Sindia's defeat freed Shah Alam from the Maratha chief's tutelage; but it also robbed the emperor of Maratha protection, as he was soon to learn by the most bitter experience. In January 1785, Zabita Khan, the son of Najib-ud-Daula, the Rohilla chief, died, leaving a son called Ghulam Kadir, a young man of ability and energy. Seeing Shah Alam unprotected at Delhi, he determined to march on the capital and by seizing the emperor's person to extort from him the office of *Amur-ul-Umra*. To

his aid he invited Ismail Beg, the nephew of Mahomed Beg Hamadani. The small Maratha garrison left there by Sindia evacuated Delhi at his approach. Shah Alam after a show of resistance invested Ghulam Kadir with the desired office. The latter then, after taking Aligarh from the Marathas, joined Ismail Beg who was besieging Agra, held in the Maratha interest by Lakhwa Dada, an experienced Shenvi officer. Sindia tried to relieve the city by sending a force under his officer Rana Khan,<sup>1</sup> but the relieving force was defeated. A second attempt was more successful. On June 18, 1788, Rana Khan with his army strongly reinforced again advanced. Ghulam Kadir, whose skill and daring had won the former battle, had left Agra to defend his own dominions from a Sikh incursion. Ismail Beg, deprived of the Rohilla soldier's help, fought a gallant battle among the ruins of Fatehpur Sikri. He charged the Marathas with the utmost fury, but was completely defeated, and, severely wounded and almost alone, he made his way to the camp of Ghulam Kadir. The officer who bore the chief part in this great Maratha victory was a Frenchman named Benoît de Boigne.

The story of this Frenchman might well have been told of one of the paladins of Charlemagne. Born in Chambéry in Savoy in 1751, he was forced when still a lad to flee the country, because of a duel with a Sardinian officer. The year 1768 saw him an ensign in the Irish brigade of the French king, a corps open to adventurers of all nations and famed throughout Europe for its discipline and valour. Not finding there the promotion which he desired, he resigned in 1774 the French service and obtained a captaincy in a Greek regiment in the pay of the Empress Catherine. Taken prisoner by the Turks in an attack on Tenedos, he was sent to Constantinople and sold as a slave, but he succeeded in communicating with his parents, who ransomed him. Returning to the Empress Catherine, he won that amorous lady's transient affections and was made a major. When his volatile mistress tired of the young Savoyard, she sent him on a cruise among the islands of the Grecian archipelago. There he met some European merchants just returned from India, whose descriptions of the country so fired his imagination, that he at once resolved to go there. He tried to reach his destination overland, but failed owing to a war between Turkey and Persia. From Aleppo he set sail for Alexandria. There his ship was wrecked off the mouth of the Nile and he was taken prisoner by some Arabs. He expected to be sold again as a slave, but the kind-hearted nomads, instead of selling him, helped him with their own money to reach Cairo. There he met friends, who enabled him to take ship for Madras. Sorely reduced in circumstances, he accepted an ensign's commission in the 6th Regiment of Madras Native Infantry. Wearying of the English army and not over well treated, he offered his services in turn to the rana of Gohad and the raja of Jaipur. Eventually he accepted the pay of Madhavrao Sindia, who had

<sup>1</sup> Rana Khan was at one time a *bhist*, or water-carrier, and was said to have saved Madhavrao Sindia when wounded in the flight from Panipat.

learnt from the fighting against General Goddard and the loss of Gwalior the immense value of European discipline and European tactics.

After the battle of Fatehpur Sikri, de Boigne left the service of Sindia and became a business man in Lucknow. Sindia, satisfied with his victory over Ismail Beg and possibly rendered irresolute by the departure of de Boigne, did not march on Delhi, but stopped at Mathura. This gave Ghulam Kadir and Ismail Beg an opportunity of immortalizing themselves by their wickedness and cruelty—an opportunity of which they fully availed themselves. Collecting the fugitives from Fatehpur Sikri, the two confederates marched on Delhi. The emperor refused them admittance, but Ismail Beg won over the garrison, and he and Ghulam Kadir entered the citadel. They first pretended to have come as partisans of Shah Alam, but, once masters of the palace, they resolved to plunder both the emperor and his capital. The former task was assigned to Ghulam Kadir and the latter to Ismail Beg. Ghulam Kadir had, it would seem, been told by the emperor's *nazir*, a eunuch in charge of the household expenditure, that Shah Alam had a hidden treasure. As the emperor would not or could not surrender it, Ghulam Kadir deposed him and enthroned in his place Bedar Bakht, a son of the Emperor Ahmad Shah. He then starved and flogged the inmates of the palace, of both sexes, in order to secure the phantom millions of the emperor. As this procedure effected nothing, he flogged and blinded Shah Alam by digging the emperor's eyes out with his own dagger, and caused to be outraged in his presence the ladies of the imperial family.<sup>1</sup> These excesses lasted for some weeks, until at last Ismail Beg, thoroughly disgusted with his accomplice, called in the help of Madhavrao Sindia. The Maratha army at once marched from Mathura to Delhi. Ghulam Kadir on learning of Ismail Beg's defection evacuated the palace and took refuge in Meerut, which Sindia at once invested. After a two months' siege Ghulam Kadir fled from Meerut, but, falling from his horse, he was captured by some peasants and brought to Sindia. Ghulam Kadir's punishment did not err on the side of undue leniency. With blackened face he was sent round Mathura on a jackass. He was then blinded, mutilated and hanged and his lands were occupied by a Maratha force.

Sindia had regretted the departure of de Boigne; and his regrets were heightened by the departure of two other officers about the same time—Médoc, who went back to France, where he was killed in a duel, and Lestineaux, who vanished with the jewellery found on Ghulam Kadir. He now begged de Boigne to return, this de Boigne did, finding soldiering more to his taste than business. Sindia authorized him to raise three brigades of disciplined infantry, some

<sup>1</sup> Ghulam Kadir was a typical Rohilla. After reading of his atrocities, one turns with some amusement to Macaulay's remark in his *Essay on Warren Hastings*: 'The only natives of India to whom the word "Gentleman" can with perfect propriety be applied are to be found among the Rohillas.' The historian Keene has described Ghulam Kadir as a 'harem page', but this is doubtful.



field artillery and a few squadrons of horse. This force was fit for service by 1790, and Sindia sent it against Ismail Beg who, tired of inaction, had become the ally of the Jaipur and Jodhpur Rajputs. On June 19, 1790, was fought the bloody battle of Patan, when de Boigne, to use his own words, 'realized all the expectations of Sindia'. After resisting throughout the day the tremendous charges of the Rathor cavalry, he led his men to the assault of the batteries. Before night fell Ismail Beg had lost his guns, his elephants and his baggage. Next day his army deserted in a mass to the Marathas.

On August 21, 1790, de Boigne entered Ajmer, the town which Bijaysingh had ceded to Raghunathrao but had retaken during the subsequent disorders in the Maratha state. Near Ajmer is the great stronghold of Taragad, or the Star Fortress. De Boigne invested it; but before he could take it, the maharaja of Jodhpur marched to its relief with thirty thousand men. On September 10, de Boigne attacked the maharajah near the town of Merta. In spite of the most reckless gallantry on the part of the Rathors, and their complete defeat of the Maratha horse, de Boigne had by 10 a.m. stormed the Rajputs' camp and dispersed their army. Merta surrendered next day and Taragad shortly afterwards.

On November 18, 1790, the Maharaja Bijaysingh of Jodhpur, the murderer of Jayappa Sindia, opened the gates of Jodhpur to the general of Jayappa's kinsman Partabsingh, the maharaja of Jaipur, after a feeble resistance, followed the example of Bijaysingh and submitted. So, too, did the lordly chief of Mewar, the maharana of Udaipur.

Madhavrao Sindia was delighted with his general's successes and bade him increase his regular infantry to eighteen thousand men, to raise bodies of light troops and to add to the number of his field-pieces. The reorganization was complete by 1791, and this was the army that Sindia wished to send against Seringapatam. Nana Phadnavis, jealous of Sindia's power, declined his assistance, and Hari Ballal Phadke induced Lord Cornwallis to make peace with Tipu before de Boigne's arrival.

Outwitted by Nana Phadnavis, Madhavrao Sindia determined to go to the Deccan and, if possible, substitute himself for the Brahman minister in the favour of the young Peshwa. On the expulsion of Ghulam Kadir, the unfortunate Shah Alam had been restored to the throne of Delhi. He renewed the Peshwa's patent of *Vakil-i-Mutalik* and in 1790, after the battle of Patan, made it an inalienable, hereditary office. In June 1792, Sindia made this a pretext for a visit to Poona. As deputy *Vakil-i-Mutalik* it was his duty to convey to his master's own hands the emperor's sign-manual. Nana Phadnavis urged the Peshwa to refuse the title, but the young prince was attracted by the honour and formally obtained from the raja of Satara leave to accept it. Nana Phadnavis on this changed his tactics. He arranged that the ceremony should be held with the greatest pomp and circumstance. He called on Sindia, who received him with magnificent courtesy in what is now the Sangam garden, the official residence of the judge of Poona. On the following day



MADHAVRAO SINDIA



BALAJI PANDIT NANA PHADNAVIS



the Peshwa received Sindia, who affected a calculated humility. On approaching the Peshwa's tent, he descended from his elephant and, leaving his bodyguard behind, walked alone to the tent and took his station below all the other officials. When the Peshwa entered, Sindia refused to be seated and from a bundle produced a pair of new slippers. 'This', he murmured, 'was my father's occupation and it must also be mine.' Reverently removing the Peshwa's slippers, he put on his feet the new ones from the bundle. Having thus shown his gratitude and loyalty to the heir of his benefactor, he showed his own wealth and power by bestowing on the prince the richest and rarest gifts of Hindustan.

Next day the ceremony took place of handing to the Peshwa the imperial patent. Within a splendid tent Sindia had erected a throne, the emblem of the absent emperor. On it lay the imperial orders, the dresses of honour and the insignia of the new office. The Peshwa approached the throne, bowed three times before it, offered to it a hundred gold mohurs and then seated himself to its left. A Persian on Sindia's staff asked permission of the Peshwa to read aloud the imperial grant as well as a decree highly gratifying to the Hindus present. By it Shah Alam forbade throughout India the slaughter of cows and bullocks. After the documents had been read, Sindia bestowed on the prince the nine robes of honour, the jewels, the sword and shield, the seal, the pen-case, the inkstand, the fan of peacock feathers, the gilded sedan chair, the palankeen, the horses, the elephants, the imperial standard, the crescents, the stars, and the orders of the fish and the sun, always bestowed by the emperor on his perpetual viceregent. The Peshwa donned the robes of honour, received the *nazars*, or offerings of the high officers of state, and returned to Poona seated in the gilded sedan-chair. As he went, Madhavrao Sindia and Hari Ballal Phadke fanned him with the imperial peacock fans. In the palace at Poona, the second part of the ceremony was enacted, and the Peshwa as *Vakil-i-Mutalik* bestowed on his deputy, Madhavrao Sindia, the robes of honour and gifts due to him on his investiture. The whole ceremonial was most carefully organized by Nana Phadnavis and Madhavrao Sindia, and was the most splendid that Poona had ever seen. It completely captivated the imagination of Madhavrao the Peshwa. Nevertheless it was only preliminary to a sustained effort on Sindia's part to oust Nana Phadnavis. Hunting, hawking, sports of every kind, were arranged to gratify the prince's boyish tastes, and Sindia beguiled the tedium of the hours between by tales of fights on the Jamna and the Ganges, and of cavalry actions among the wild valleys of Rajasthan and the broad plains round Delhi.

Nana Phadnavis saw clearly the aims of Madhavrao Sindia and sought for a suitable weapon with which to drive him from Poona. This he found ready to his hand in Tukoji Holkar. As his mistress Ahalyabai grew old, she spent more and more time in the building of temples, the repetition of prayers and the practice of penances; and she left the work of administration almost wholly to her adopted son Tukoji. That distinguished soldier had seen with bitter jealousy

the victories of de Boigne and he resolved to hire another Frenchman to raise a similarly disciplined army. The man on whom his choice fell was a Breton naval officer known as the Chevalier du Drenec. Du Drenec was a native of Brest and came of a good family, his father being a commodore in the French navy. He ran away from his ship, took service with Médoc's corps at Delhi, left Médoc for Reinhardt, and now accepted Tukoji's offer and a monthly salary of Rs. 3,000. Du Drenec did his work well and had soon trained four battalions of infantry and a small body of artillery. While thus preparing himself for war, Tukoji Holkar secretly allied himself to Ismail Beg, who had taken refuge with the widow of Najaf Khan, Ghulam Kadir's sister. That turbulent lady had established herself in Kannad, a strong place on the borders of Bikaner. It was surrounded by sandhills, and tamarisk scrub, which afforded neither food nor water to a besieging army and was almost impassable for siege-guns. Before Ismail Beg could take any definite course, de Boigne sent against him his second-in-command, another Frenchman, named Perron, who had come to India as a common sailor but had joined the corps of Sangster, a mercenary officer in the pay of the rana of Gohad. Afterwards he took service under Sindia, and when Lestineaux vanished with Ghulam Kadir's jewellery, he was given the command of a battalion and after the defeat of Ismail Beg the command of a brigade.

This capable officer made his way through the dry and difficult country round Kannad, defeated Ismail Beg in an action outside the fortress and in a short time forced him to surrender. Having despatched Ismail Beg to a prison in the Agra fort, de Boigne was able to give his full attention to Tukoji Holkar. He took the field with nine thousand infantry, on whose banners danced the emblem of his own native country, the white cross of Savoy. He effected a junction with Lakwa Dada, another general of Sindia, who commanded a large body of Maratha cavalry. On September 20, 1792, de Boigne came upon Tukoji Holkar at the Lakheri pass in the territory of the Kotah state, on the road from Kannad to Ajmer. The battle was obstinately disputed. Du Drenec did for his master all that a gallant and experienced French officer could do. Indeed, fortune seemed at first to smile on Holkar. As de Boigne advanced, his columns, unprotected by his own fire, were mown down by Holkar's batteries. When he hastened up his guns to protect his infantry, a lucky shell blew up a dozen casks of ammunition. In the midst of the ensuing confusion, great masses of Holkar's cavalry charged de Boigne's wavering infantry. *An ordinary man might have thought that by a retirement alone could the army be saved. But de Boigne was no ordinary man.* Cool and collected in the midst of danger, he re-formed his regiments under cover of a wood and poured volley after volley into Holkar's squadrons. As they paused, he charged them with his small body of disciplined cavalry, and followed the charge with a general advance up the Lakheri pass. Du Drenec with one thousand five hundred men held the pass bravely and well, and it was not until nearly all the officers and men of his newly formed battalions had fallen side by side, that de Boigne captured the pass and thirty-eight guns. Holkar's

routed army fled the field and revenged themselves by sacking Sindia's capital, Ujjain.

The failure of Holkar rendered Nana Phadnavis impotent; and the arrival of Parashrambhau Patwardhan with two thousand horse in the minister's interest only furnished Madhavrao Sindia with an excuse for summoning Perron with a brigade of disciplined infantry. At the same time Sindia began to interfere openly in the administration. When Nana Phadnavis on behalf of the young Peshwa assumed the charge of the lands of the *Pant Sachiv*, still a minor, Sindia drove out Bajirao Moreshwar, Nana Phadnavis' agent, and restored his possessions to the young noble. At last the situation became so acute that the minister made a personal appeal to his master. He related the efforts by which he had guarded the young prince's throne, how he had fought Raghunathrao, the English, the Nizam and Tipu, one after the other and all successfully. In Sindia he saw a more dangerous and insidious enemy—one who would not only remove the minister but the Peshwa himself from his office and, in the name of the faintant raja of Satara, govern the Maratha empire in his own interests. If, however, he (Nana Phadnavis) no longer retained his master's confidence, he would gladly resign his burden and, as befitted a Brahman in the decline of life, would become an anchorite on the banks of the Ganges. The eloquence of the minister and the recollection of his many kindnesses and his past loyalty moved the generous-hearted boy to tears. He begged his old servant's forgiveness and promised to repay his services by unabated trust. Victorious for the moment, Nana Phadnavis resumed his labours, but Sindia also renewed his intrigues and would in all probability have succeeded in his aims, had he not succumbed to an enemy more formidable even than Nana Phadnavis. Early in February 1794, he fell suddenly ill of fever. After a few days' illness he died in his camp at Vanavdi, a spot just outside the eastern limits of Poona.

The author of the *Tarikh-i-Muzaffari* has told a fantastic story of Sindia's murder by the agents of Nana Phadnavis, but, although the tale has found credence with one or two English writers, it is quite unfounded. The life of Madhavrao Sindia had been spent in the camp and the field. His brothers had fallen one by one in action, and he himself had been so severely wounded at Panipat that but for timely aid he would have bled to death. His life had been passed in ambitious schemes and arduous labours. He had recently suffered a diplomatic defeat at the hands of Nana Phadnavis. There was nothing strange that his frame, worn out by toil and cares, should have proved unable to throw off a malignant fever.

That Madhavrao Sindia was a great man none can deny, and in the wars against the English he did valuable service to his country. But his conduct after the peace of Salbai was not in the interests of the Poona government. He had no desires save for his own advancement; and his affected humility in the Peshwa's presence merely cloaked his designs to usurp the Peshwa's office and to govern in his place, as the viceregent both of the emperor of Delhi and of the raja of Satara.

## CHAPTER LIV

### WAR AGAINST NIZAM ALI DEATH OF SAVAI MADHAVRAO

THE death of Madhavrao Sindia left Nana Phadnavis without a rival in the Maratha empire. The Peshwa fell once more under the dominion of his commanding mind, and a successful foreign war raised to an even higher point the minister's fortunes. Nizam Ali had for many years taken advantage of the disorders at Poona, to withhold the Maratha dues of *chauth* and *ardeshmukhi*. In 1791, Nana Phadnavis directed the Maratha envoys at the Nizam's court, Govindrao Kale and Govindrao Pingli, to demand the appointment of commissioners to settle the Nizam's debt. The Nizam appointed commissioners, but they produced a set of figures so ridiculously inaccurate as to show the Poona government to be in debt to Nizam Ali. Nana Phadnavis examined them carefully and refuted them item by item. The Nizam was silenced and promised to settle the Maratha claims on the close of the war against Tipu. On the conclusion of that war the Nizam again delayed a settlement and rapidly added to his army. To effect this measure he employed a French officer named François de Raymond. This gallant adventurer was born in Gascony in 1755. In 1775, when twenty years of age, he became a sub-lieutenant in the service of Haider Ali. In 1783, he was given a commission in the French army and served as aide-de-camp to de Bussy. In 1786 he entered the service of Nizam Ali and raised a regiment, first three hundred and afterwards seven hundred strong. His bravery and skill in the war against Tipu caused his command to grow to five thousand. He was now ordered to increase his force to one of twenty-three battalions. The Nizam, his preparations completed, rejected contemptuously the Maratha claims and informed Govindrao Kale that, so far from his owing anything to the Marathas, they owed him twenty-six million rupees. The Nizam's diwan, Mashir-ul-Mulk, added that, if Nana Phadnavis wished for further explanations he should attend the Nizam's court; and that if he did not do so he would be brought there by force. Such an insult was one that no ambassador could suffer, and Govindrao Kale and Govindrao Pingli left Hyderabad and returned to Poona. Both governments prepared for war.

The Nizam, who placed the utmost confidence in Raymond's battalions, expected the rapid subjugation of the Maratha Deccan. His confidence spread through his army, which assembled at Bedar, and his captains talked openly of sacking and burning Poona. But the chief braggart was the diwan Mashir-ul-Mulk who, with a fine taste in rhetoric, declared in open darbar that the Moghuls would now be freed from Maratha encroachments; that they would recover Bijapur and Khondesh, and that they would never grant the Marathas peace until they had sent the Peshwa off to Benares, with a cloth about

his loins and a pot of water in his hand, to mutter incantations on the banks of the Ganges.<sup>1</sup>

The preparations of Nana Phadnavis were such as to cause Nizam Ali to reflect gravely. They were on a gigantic scale. Daulatrao Sindia, Madhavrao's great nephew and successor, and Tukoji Holkar were already in Poona and at once offered contingents, of these Sindia's numbered twenty-five thousand and Holkar's sixteen thousand. Govindrao Gaikwad who, on the successive deaths of his younger brothers, Fatehsing and Manajirao, had on December 19, 1793, become sole ruler of Baroda,<sup>2</sup> sent a large force from Gujarat. Raghujii Bhosle, who on his father Mudhoji's death in 1788 had become autocrat of Nagpur and Berar, joined in person with fifteen thousand horse and foot. Besides these great Maratha captains there were present other lesser Maratha feudatories. Nimbalkar, Ghatge, Chavan, Daphale, Powar, Thorat and Patankar, and the Brahman chieftains, Malegaonkar, Vinchurkar, the *Pratimdhis*, the *Pant Sachiv* and the Rastes were all fittingly represented. In all, the Maratha army numbered no less than 130,000 cavalry and infantry and ten thousand Pindharis, or irregular horse. The Peshwa's household troops were commanded by Ramchandra, commonly called Baburao Phadke, the son of Hari Ballal Phadke. The latter fell ill of dysentery shortly after the death of Sindia and, resigning his offices, he bade the Peshwa farewell and retired to Siddhatik, at which holy spot he devoted his last days to the worship of Ganpa. His piety, unhappily, did not cure his disease, and he died in June 1794 leaving a high reputation as a valiant and skilful commander.

The Maratha army was under the supreme command of Parashrambhau Patwardhan. Hearing on March 10 that Nizam Ali was marching towards Kharda, a town fifty-six miles south-east of Ahmadnagar, the Maratha generalissimo sent Baburao Phadke ahead to attack the Moghuls in the Mohri pass. Baburao had neither his father's skill nor experience and was driven back with heavy loss. The Moghuls camped that night at Kharda and next morning marched towards Parinda. On the march they met a reconnaissance force led by Parashrambhau Patwardhan in person. A body of Afghans in the Nizam's service charged the Marathas and, wounding the commander-in-chief, dispersed the whole Maratha vanguard. The action spread to the main armies, and the severest fighting took place between Raymond's regular battalions and those of Perron, who was in command of Sindia's disciplined troops. Nizam Ali had been in his youth a daring man, but success and prosperity seem to have sapped his courage. Suddenly and for no apparent reason he ordered a general retirement on Kharda. The Moghul retreat filled the Marathas with confidence, and by the time the Moghuls had reached Kharda they were a beaten army. During the night their depression became acute and the discharge of a sentry's musket produced a universal panic. The Moghul army that had hardly suffered in the field fled

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff, Vol. II, p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> He was officially regent on behalf of his imbecile brother Sayaji.



from their camp in terror; and morning found the Nizam with only ten thousand men covering inside Kharda fort, round which was strewn far and wide the wreckage of the vanished army. The Marathas without delay encircled Kharda. It was but a little fort commanded by hills, and soon a glass of water was selling for a gold mohur. The horses and cattle all died for want of forage and in a few days the Nizam was forced to sue for peace in the most humiliating fashion.<sup>1</sup> He sent his envoy with his seal and dagger to put them at Nana Phadnavis' feet and implored him to name his own terms of peace. Nana Phadnavis remembered how the unscrupulous Nizam had cajoled Raghunathrao and then turned his enemy, and the terms that he imposed were by no means easy. First and foremost, Nana Phadnavis demanded the surrender of the vainglorious Mashir-ul-Mulk, who had so grossly insulted the Peshwa. To this the Nizam agreed, although with great reluctance. Mashir-ul-Mulk was handed over and escorted to the Maratha camp by two hundred Maratha horse. In addition the Nizam ceded

(1) the fort of Daulatabad and all the territory from the Tapti river to the fort of Parinda to the Peshwa,

(2) lands worth Rs. 3,18,000 annually to Raghujii Bhosle, and

(3) the Nizam also agreed to pay Rs. 3,00,00,000 to Peshwa by way of indemnity and arrears of tribute, and Rs. 29,00,000 by way of arrears to Raghujii Bhosle.

This victory was justly prized by the Marathas as one of the greatest that they had ever gained. With a loss of barely a hundred men, they had defeated and dispersed an army of over a hundred thousand men, they had taken vast quantities of plunder and, besides killing and wounding fifteen thousand of the enemy in the pursuit, they had extorted from the Nizam concessions of the greatest value. The merit of the achievement rests wholly with the great regent. He alone had the influence that could overawe and control the Peshwa's turbulent feudatories. Daulatrao Sindia was his subservient ally. Tukoji Holkar, whose mind and body were rapidly decaying, was the minister's creature. Raghujii Bhosle was devoted to his cause. Govindrao Gaikwad had suffered too much in the past to risk a quarrel, and the Chitpavan *jaghirdars* honoured Nana Phadnavis as a caste-fellow. For a few months after the battle of Kharda Nana Phadnavis was the foremost figure in India; then from the cloudless sky fell a thunderbolt.

The cause of the terrible disaster that overtook the Maratha state on October 25, 1795, must be traced to the family of Raghunathrao, who had during his lifetime brought such misfortunes on his country. Raghunathrao had chosen, as already mentioned, the little town of Kopergaon on the Godavari, some miles downstream from Nasik. Some time after his death his widow asked for and obtained leave to move, for reasons of health, from Kopergaon to a small village nearer

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff says the siege lasted for two days. The *Chitnis Bakhar* says it lasted for seventeen days.

Nasik, which, called after her, is still known as Anandvali.<sup>1</sup> Thither she took her two sons, Bajirao and Chimnaji Appa and her adopted son Amratrao. The change did her health no good and she died there in April 1794. When war broke out between the Maratha government and the Nizam, Nana Phadnavis had the three boys taken from Anandvali to the fort of Shivner, where the great king had been born. This was a necessary precaution, for Bajirao was on the threshold of manhood and the partisans of his family, although long inactive, were still numerous. A rising headed by the son of Raghunathrao at a time when the Maratha army had gone on field service might have had the most disastrous results.

The war concluded, Nana Phadnavis kept the boys prisoners at Shivner. This was really a violation of the treaty of Salbai, but in the minister's opinion state reasons justified his action. Raghunathrao's partisans, however, made much of it and stigmatized Nana Phadnavis' conduct as faithless and unprincipled. At the same time they drew a glowing picture of Bajirao's personal attractions. The young prince was then nineteen years of age. His face was conspicuously handsome. His person was tall and pleasing and his skill as a swordsman, as a horseman and as an archer was the talk of Poona. Nor was his mind less finely formed than his body. He was deeply learned in the Sanskrit tongue, and his address had the triple charm of grace, learning and intelligence. In 1795, the Peshwa Madhavrao was in his twenty-first year, and his wives and servants had long been urging him to seize the power that was his by right. Indeed, Madhavrao had once or twice tried to assert himself, notably in the matter of Gashiram Kotwal.

This man was a Kanoja Brahman and thus of the same caste as the depraved Kalasha. He was a man of great energy and ability and had thereby won the goodwill of Nana Phadnavis, who appointed him *kotwal*, or superintendent, of the Poona police. Once in an independent post he took advantage of it to indulge in a series of abominable crimes. His practice was to seize strangers who came to Poona and to rob and murder them. Nana Phadnavis heard rumours about his conduct, but could not believe that a man whom he had known personally as a trustworthy and hardworking public servant could so misuse his position. One day Ghashiram Kotwal seized some Telangi Brahmans who had come into Poona in the hope of getting *dakshina*, or alms. Why he should have victimized these men is hard to understand, for as religious beggars they could hardly have had much money. Nevertheless he threw them into prison, where he slowly starved them. Their caste-fellows in Poona came to hear of their situation and informed Manaji Sindia, better known as Manaji Phadke. He gathered a band of men, broke open the doors of Ghashiram Kotwal's dungeon and rescued the dying Brahmans. The mob rushed off to the Peshwa's palace, where the minister and the

<sup>1</sup> At Anandvali the curious visitor will still be shown spots where, according to the local legend, Anandvali tried to build houses. Unfortunately her wickedness was such that the houses all fell down before completion.

prince were closeted together. Nana Phadnavis still refused to believe that Ghashiram could be guilty, and would have taken no action; but Madhavrao insisted that the proofs were overwhelming and ordered Ghashiram to be handed over to the Telangis, who at once stoned him to death.<sup>1</sup>

Madhavrao now tried to assert himself on behalf of his cousins, in whom he was deeply interested, as the only surviving members of his family.

He asked Nana Phadnavis to release them, but the minister knew well that with the beautiful face and personal charm of Bajirao went a nature as wicked and coldly cruel as that of his mother Anandibai. He dwelt on the crimes and treachery of Raghunathrao, who had murdered his nephew, Madhavrao's own father, and had called in the English to drive Madhavrao himself from the throne. Madhavrao retorted that in his father Raghunathrao's wickedness Bajirao had had no share, and that the friendship of Chimnaji Appa and Bajirao I had been marred by neither jealousy nor ambition. The minister was in despair. He had no son of his own and he loved Madhavrao better than anyone else in the world. It was for him, so he thought in his paternal affection, to stop his beloved ward from rushing on to his own destruction. Forgetful that the years, which had produced but little change in himself, had turned Madhavrao from a child to a man, the minister treated the prince as if he had been a naughty boy. He had him closely watched, and confined Bajirao more strictly than before. His measures proved vain against the malignant charm of the captive prince. His jailors were Raghopant Godbole and Balwantrao Nagonath, and the latter Bajirao soon won over to his cause. Balwantrao Nagonath contrived to convey to the Peshwa a message full of respect and attachment, adding that he was in confinement at Shivner, and Madhavrao under the control of his minister, that their condition as prisoners was similar, but that their minds and affections were free, and that they should love each other as cousins should, that, just as their ancestors had won glory in the past, he (Bajirao) hoped they also would together win glory in the future. To this message Madhavrao sent an affectionate reply, and a regular correspondence between the cousins ensued. At length its existence was betrayed to Nana Phadnavis. For once the minister lost his self-command. He upbraided the Peshwa in terms quite unsuited to their respective positions. Loading Balwantrao Nagonath with chains, he threw him into a hill fortress, and still further increased the severity of Bajirao's imprisonment. The Peshwa was deeply hurt and the wound to his feelings aggravated a malady which, looking to his family history, must have been consumption.

He suffered from a fever, which legend has attributed to a magic amulet sent him by his cousin Bajirao; but which is a common symptom

<sup>1</sup> Grant Duff Moor's version is rather different. According to him Ghashiram or Ghyanshiram was a Gor Brahman of Aurangabad. He arrested thirty-four Brahman revellers, one night; but unfortunately the place where the police put them was so small and hot that twenty-one died in the night (see Parasnis, *Poona in Bygone Days*, p. 106).

of tuberculosis.<sup>1</sup> He grew weaker and weaker and had frequent fainting fits, especially during the month of *Bhadrapad*, or September, after the fatigues of the Ganpati festival of the 4th *Bhadrapad*. Early in *Ashwin*, or October, he often lay for hours unconscious; but on the 10th of the bright half of *Ashwin* (October 22, 1795), he roused himself for the arduous task of celebrating the great national festival of the *Dasara*. The story runs that at one time the sage Kautsa came to the court of King Raghu of Ayodhya, the great grandfather of the divine Ramchandra. The sage begged of the king fourteen crores of rupees, which he owed to his teacher Vartantu. The king, who at a recent sacrifice had given away all his wealth to Brahmans, could bestow nothing on Kautsa. He resolved to obtain the money by raiding Amraoti, the capital of the god Indra. When the news of the intended raid reached Indra, he called to his help the god of wealth, Kubher. The latter on the night of the 9th of the bright half of *Ashwin*, showered gold for some hours on a giant *shami*<sup>1</sup> tree in Raghu's courtyard. In this way Raghu was able to redeem his honour and give Kautsa the money that he needed. In memory of this event the hero Ramchandra had chosen the 10th of the bright half of *Ashwin* for the day on which to set out for the conquest of Lanka; and the Rajput princes had always begun on that day their winter campaigns. By Madhavrao II's time the *Dasara festival* had become the occasion of a great ceremonial display. On October 22, 1795, the Peshwa rose early, performed his customary worship, reviewed his troops, received the ambassadors of foreign powers, distributed robes of honour to his feudatories and nobles, and in the evening set out on a gorgeously caparisoned elephant to lead a procession round Poona. The procession was not expected to return until after dark; but the young prince was tired out. He had a high fever and could not keep his seat in the howdah, indeed, he was only prevented from falling by Appa Balwant Mehendale, who tied the Peshwa to himself with a scarf. The procession could no longer go on; and, instead of returning by torchlight, it came back before the sun had set. The multitude were dismayed at the untoward end to the *Dasara* celebrations. Two days later their dismay was deepened by the terrible calamity that overtook the unhappy young man. On the 12th of the bright half of *Ashwin* (October 25, 1795), he fell from the balcony of the Ganpati hall on to a fountain in the courtyard below. The fall fractured his thigh, disfigured his face and caused him severe internal injuries. No event in Maratha history has in recent times been more discussed than this, save perhaps the death of Afzul Khan. Grant Duff (Vol. II, p. 254) has observed: 'He (Madhavrao) deliberately threw himself from a terrace in his palace,' and on the authority of this great writer English historians have without exception adopted the view that the prince committed suicide. Even some Indian writers have accepted it, notably in Khare's *Life of Nana Phadnavis* and in Khadijkar's

<sup>1</sup> *Mimosa serma*. I heard this tale from the lips of an old Sanskrit scholar of Poona many years ago.

powerful drama, *The Death of Savai Madhavrao*<sup>1</sup>. The latter indeed, has suggested that the prince committed suicide, because cousin Bajirao's agent poisoned Madhavrao's mind by 'making believe' that both he and his wife Yasodabai were the offspring of Phadnavis' criminal intrigues. But the dramatist's suggestion no more historical basis than the death of Schiller's *John of A* battle. In spite of the high authority of Grant Duff, there is, seems to me, grave reason to doubt the theory of suicide. The was very ill and could easily have thrown himself off the terrace the delirium of fever. This is the view both of the author of *Peshwa's Bukhar* and the author of the *Chitnis Bakhar*. It is supported by the following passage from a letter of Uhtoff Assistant Resident, to the Governor-General, dated October 27,

'Reports are various as to the cause of this melancholy and scarce one even of the most moderate considering it as accidental, but at least originating in imprudence. Some say the Peshwa was sitting astride on the balustrade, a parapet of a terrace or upper room and, losing his balance, fell out into the basin of a stone fountain. The most prevalent account is that the Peshwa, in a temporary fit of delirium or derangement jumped or fell from an upper room or terrace into a fountain below. However strange this may appear, I assure you, His Sir, that I do not trouble you with it on mere vague rumour but from accounts through many different channels. It is added by some that the Peshwa had been out of order for three days.'

On the other hand Tukoji Holkar, in a letter to his son Kas discovered by Vasudev G. Apte and quoted on page 22 *Burway's Life of Shalyabai Holkar* has described the death of the Peshwa as due to an accident. He was sitting with his leaning against the railing, wrote Tukoji. His grandmother Sathe and several servants were in the room, when the Peshwa, faint, got up suddenly. Not seeing what he was doing, he balanced and fell over the railing upon the fountain below. A letter from Jivaji Babarao, the Poona agent of Holkar to Kas written about a fortnight after the occurrence, ascribed the fall sudden stroke (*vavucha upadrava houn*). Although these three differ as to the cause of the fall, not one of them attributes it to suicide. It is also, as it seems to me, unlikely that if the Peshwa had a right mind wished deliberately to kill himself, he would have as he did. He could easily have poisoned himself with opium pleasant and painless death. To throw himself from the terrace the act of a man not in his proper senses. The probabilities as the evidence of contemporary documents point to accident or rather than to wilful suicide as the cause of the Peshwa's death.

The fall rendered the young prince unconscious, but a swe who was cleaning the courtyard, raised piercing shrieks, which brought

<sup>1</sup> Madhavrao II was called Savai Madhavrao, or Madhavrao and a Quar the hope that he might surpass his great namesake Madhavrao the Great.

a crowd of servants to the spot, and they at once carried the injured man inside. A surgeon was sent for, who dressed the wounds. In the meantime the news spread like wildfire and quickly reached Nana Phadnavis who, in his hurry to rush to Madhavrao's help, stumbled and fell heavily over the doorstep—a fall which, so it was said afterwards, presaged his own subsequent fall from power. Everything that careful treatment and nursing could do was done for the injured prince, but he was beyond human aid. After three days, spent in great pain, he passed away on October 27, 1795, in the arms of Baburao Phadke, to whom he expressed his dying wish that his cousin Bajirao should succeed him as Peshwa.

## CHAPTER LV

### THE ACCESSION OF BAJIRAO II

ALTHOUGH Madhavrao's dying wish had been that his cousin Bajirao should succeed him, Nana Phadnavis knew well the venomous hatred with which the son of Anandibai regarded him. On October 28 he summoned to Poona Raghujī Bhosle and Daulatrao Sindia, and proposed to them the adoption of a son by Yasodabai the child-widow of the late Peshwa. Baloba Tatya Pagnis, Sindia's minister, at first demurred, but afterward, consented, and they drew up a deed in which they recorded and approved the proposal. The fortunes of Bajirao now seemed desperate, but he used his charm of manner on Baloba Tatya, who from the first had been disposed in his favour and soon won him to his cause. Through Baloba Tatya's aid and an offer of territory worth four lakhs a year, he secured the adhesion of Daulatrao Sindia. It was agreed that the latter should march on Shivner and release Bajirao. But the agreement was no sooner drawn up than it reached the ears of Nana Phadnavis. He sent for Parashrambhau Patwardhan who, marching with the greatest expedition from Tasgaon to Poona, saw Nana Phadnavis. The soldier and the statesman decided to anticipate Sindia by releasing Bajirao themselves. Parashrambhau made a forced march to Shivner and offered the throne to Bajirao. Amritrao pressed his brother to stand by his promise to Sindia, but Bajirao was tempted by the immediate chance offered to him. He broke his agreement to Sindia, and, after making Parashrambhau go to the little temple erected by Jijibai to Parvati under the name of Shivali Devī, he made him hold a cow's tail and swear by the holy Godavari river that he meant no treachery. Thereafter he agreed that he and his brother Chimnaji Appa should go back with Parashrambhau to Poona. Amritrao was kept in prison at Shivner. At Poona Nana Phadnavis waited on the prince and both agreed to forget past enmities. Bajirao was to be made Peshwa and was to appoint Nana Phadnavis as his first minister.

Baloba Tatya Pagnis, who had looked forward to governing the Maratha state through Sindia, was furiously angry at the conduct of Bajirao. He induced Sindia to march on Poona. Parashrambhau

Patwardhan would have stood his ground and fought; but Nana Phadnavis was better informed as to the discipline and training of de Boigne's battalions, and knew that a battle with them would merely make Sindia sole master of the state. Nana Phadnavis left Poona for Purandar, while Sindia's troops occupied Poona. Baloba Pagnis, to punish Bajirao for his treachery, proposed to set him aside in favour of his younger brother Chimnaji Appa. To make the latter's claims superior to those of his elder brother, he was to be adopted by Yasodabai. This proposal Parashrambhau approved after consulting Nana Phadnavis. The latter, although he made no objection to it, at once evolved another scheme of his own. He would free the new raja of Satara, Shahu II, and, restoring him to the throne of Shivaji, would govern as his first minister. The raja, however, made difficulties, and Nana Phadnavis at last abandoned his own scheme and gave his genuine support to the proposed adoption of Chimnaji Appa. He received from the raja's hands the state robes for Chimnaji Appa's investiture as Peshwa. These he forwarded to Poona; but he did not go there himself in spite of a pressing invitation from Bahiropanth Mehendale, as he had grounds for believing that Sindia and Baloba Pagnis intended to imprison him if a favourable opportunity offered. Bajirao was unaware of the proposal to depose him in his brother Chimnaji Appa's favour, and, when he was invited by Sindia to visit him, he unsuspectingly went to his camp and was at once secured. Chimnaji Appa was then taken from Bajirao's camp to the city, where much against his will he was adopted as Yasodabai's son. On May 26, 1796, he was formally invested as Peshwa.

Baloba Pagnis now desired above everything to secure Nana Phadnavis' person. But that astute statesman fully realized his danger. He fled from Wai up the valley of the Kistna, crossed the Mahableshwar plateau near Old Mahableshwar, and went down what is now known as the Fitzgerald ghat to the town of Mahad, and put a strong garrison into the great fort of Raygad. After his flight his lands were seized and his house sacked, but his treasure he had hidden so artfully that to the present day its hiding-place is unknown. The common misfortunes of Bajirao and Nana Phadnavis brought them together. A certain Balaji Kunjar, a servant of Bajirao, acted as a go-between; at the same time Nana Phadnavis could count on the support of Tukoji Holkar, while he used one Sakharam Ghatge of Kagal to win over Sindia, behind the back of Baloba Pagnis. The bait that Sakharam Ghatge held out was the hand of his daughter, whose beauty was famous, and whose birth, as a lady of the house of Kagal, was superior to that of Sindia himself. Nor were these the only efforts of Nana Phadnavis. He promised Mashir-ul-Mulk, the Nizam's diwan, his liberty if he won over his master, and he promised to the Nizam the return of all the lands ceded after the battle of Kharda. In this way he secured valuable help from Nizam Ali. Manaji Phadke, the veteran warrior guilty of treachery in the Carnatic, openly adhered to the cause of Bajirao and raised ten thousand men. Lastly, Raghuji Bhosle promised his assistance. So skilfully was the plot concealed, that Daulatrao Sindia was able on October 27 to arrest

Saloba Pagnis' without difficulty, and Parashrambhau Patwardhan, after escaping from Poona, was captured at Shivner. On December 4, 1796, Bajirao, released from confinement, was once more invested by Raja Shahu with the office of Peshwa. The adoption of Chimnaji Appa was declared invalid, as being that of an uncle by his nephew's widow,<sup>1</sup> and Nana Phadnavis was restored to his office as first minister.<sup>1</sup>

The misfortunes that had united Bajirao and Nana Phadnavis had so soon disappeared, than their old hatred revived. Bajirao refused to sanction Nana Phadnavis' treaty with Mashur-ul-Mulk and in August 1797, Nana Phadnavis' faithful friend and supporter, Tukoji Holkar, died. He left two legitimate sons, Kashirao, who was half-witted, and Malharrao, a man of some intelligence, as well as two illegitimate sons, Jaswantrao and Vithoji. Their quarrels gave Daulatrao Sindia an excuse for interference. At Kashirao's request he tried to arrest Malharrao Holkar who, refusing to surrender, was killed. His infant son Khanderao was taken prisoner. Jaswantrao Holkar fled to Nagpur and Vithoji Holkar to Kolhapur. Sindia, as champion of Kashirao and guardian of Khanderao, became for the time being the master of the Holkar domain. In the break-up of the party attached to Nana Phadnavis' fortunes, Bajirao saw the opportunity of revenge. In his plot against his minister, Sindia, Govindrao Kale, Amritrao the Peshwa's adopted brother and Sakharām Ghatge were Bajirao's accomplices. Nana Phadnavis was induced by the safe conduct of Michael Filoze, a Neapolitan mueteer who had risen to the command of eight infantry battalions, to visit Sindia's camp. There he was at once seized by Sakharām Ghatge together with his retinue. Ghatge took the opportunity to plunder the houses of Nana Phadnavis' adherents, and Bajirao imprisoned his friends, of whom Baburao Phadke and Appa Balwant Mehendale were the principal. Nana Phadnavis was confined at Ahmadnagar.

Bajirao had wreaked his vengeance on his enemy, but in doing so had made Daulatrao Sindia all-powerful. To secure Sindia's help he had promised him twenty million rupees; but he was quite unable to make good his promise. Sindia, who could not pay his troops, would take no denial; so the prince and his feudatory deputed Sakharām Ghatge to extort it from the citizens of Poona. Sakharām Ghatge's information was supplemented by that of Balaji Kunjar, and for several days Poona suffered at the will of its own prince horrors similar to those suffered by Delhi at the hands of Nadir Shah. Every one suspected of wealth, no matter what his politics, was tortured until he disgorged it. Amritrao, in whose nature cruelty found no place, remonstrated with Bajirao and begged him to seize Sindia, on whom Bajirao threw all the blame. It was impossible to do so openly, so it was proposed to invite him to a darbar, and then detain him, thus paying him out for his own treachery to Bajirao. The scheme progressed favourably up to a certain point and would have wholly

<sup>1</sup> *Chitnis Bakhar*, p. 67. The relationship was really that of first cousins once removed.



succeeded but for Bajirao's cowardice. Sindia accepted the invitation to the darbar. When he attended it, the Peshwa publicly upbraided him for the conduct of Sakharām Ghatge, and ordered him to withdraw his troops to Jamgaon. Sindia courteously answered that he would do so as soon as the Peshwa paid him his debts. Amritrao at this point wished to signal to Aba Kale, the commander of one of the Peshwa's household regiments, to arrest Sindia, but, although there would have been no difficulty in making the arrest, Bajirao's heart failed him and he let Sindia go unmolested.

While these dissensions prevailed in Poona, the Raja Shahu resolved to make a bid to recover the empire of the Bhosles. Indeed, Bajirao, when struggling against Nana Phadnis, had promised to restore the raja to the position of Shahu I. This promise Bajirao had left unfulfilled and the raja now called on him to keep his word. At the same time he collected troops and successfully attacked Madhavrao Raste, who had been sent to Satara with such forces as the Peshwa could spare from Poona. At this point Parashrambhau Patwardhan, who was in confinement at Wai, offered to reduce the raja to submission. Bajirao gladly accepted his offer, and Parashrambhau Patwardhan, after raising a large body of troops and joining Raste, successfully forded the Yenna, then in high flood, and surprised the raja's camp. The raja's bands were dispersed, his brother Chaturising escaped to Kolhapur, and the raja took refuge in Satara fort. It was not provisioned, so after a short investment it had to surrender. The raja was reduced to his former subordinate place, and Parashrambhau was received back into favour on a promise to pay ten lakhs of rupees.

Sindia, whom we left all-powerful in the Maratha state, was early in 1798 brought to the brink of ruin by a quarrel with the widows of Madhavrao Sindia. Daulatrao had promised to look after Madhavrao's four widows and he, no doubt, would have done so as befitted their position, but for his vast military expenditure. As it was, he cut down the ladies' allowances to the lowest point, and they retaliated by charging him with an incestuous intrigue with Bhagirathabai, the youngest and comeliest of the four. Sindia's next move was to try treacherously to immure them in Ahmadnagar fort; but the ladies, informed of his intention, succeeded in escaping to the camp of Amritrao, who happened to be marching to Junnar. They sought and obtained his protection. Sakharām Ghatge, after openly attacking Amritrao's camp without success, surprised and plundered it. This was a direct insult to the Peshwa, who at once signed with Nizam Ali a defensive and offensive alliance for Sindia's overthrow. Sindia had but one resource left, namely to release Nana Phadnis. Not long afterwards Nizam Ali repudiated his alliance with Bajirao and once more Sindia was in the ascendant. Bajirao reconciled himself with Sindia and Nana Phadnis, while Sindia, weary of Sakharām Ghatge's cruelty, put him under arrest. On October 15, 1798, Nana Phadnis assumed again the office of first minister, but he never regained his confidence in Bajirao. In the meantime events of the highest importance were happening in the south of India.

## THE ACCESSION OF BAJRAO

Ever since the disastrous treaty of February 1792, Tipu Sultan had thirsted for revenge against the English. To attain his vengeance he sought allies.<sup>1</sup> In 1795, he induced Ali Jah, a son of Nizam Ali, to rebel against his father, hoping that in this way he might have the resources of the Nizam's dominions on his side instead of against him, but the rebellion was promptly suppressed by Raymond and his French contingent. In 1796, Tipu sent an embassy to the court of Zaman Shah, ruler of Afghanistan, but without success. In 1797 he became, as a desperate measure, a French citizen, and sent an embassy to Mauritius, asking the governor for forty thousand troops, of whom ten thousand should be pure French and the rest negroes commanded by French officers. The governor of Mauritius was quite unable to furnish such a force, but a hundred French citizens volunteered for the sultan's service. The despatch of these embassies was perfectly well known to the English Governor-General, Lord Mornington (afterwards the Marquess of Wellesley) and he determined to dispel the danger of further trouble in the south, by destroying Tipu's power once and for all. He declared war on the sultan, and called on the Nizam and the Peshwa, as his allies, to send contingents. Bajrao was doubtful what policy to pursue and, waiting on events, did nothing. The Nizam sent some sixteen thousand men, which raised the number of the invading army to thirty-seven thousand men. Tipu's army was nearly fifty thousand strong, but was far inferior in quality and in armament. He was outgeneralled, beaten in the field and, on May 2, 1799, killed at the storming of Seringapatam. A large treasure fell into the hands of the victors and the state was at their mercy. Its revenues were estimated at three million *kantharai* pagodas, or nine million rupees. It was resolved to partition the conquered country as follows: the British Government and the Nizam were each to receive lands yielding annually 5,37,000 pagodas, or 16,11,000 rupees. To the Peshwa were to be given lands worth annually 2,64,000 pagodas or 7,92,000 rupees. The remainder, after the deduction of a certain portion for the maintenance of the family of Haidar Ali, was formed into a kingdom for the infant son of Chamraja<sup>2</sup> the last Hindu king of Mysore, who had died in 1796. The widow of Chamraja gratefully accepted the offered kingdom, ceded the island of Seringapatam to the English, and bound herself and her son's descendants to consider themselves as under English protection, 'while the sun and moon continued'.

The news of the death of Tipu and the conquest of Mysore fell like a thunderbolt on the court of Bajrao. The Nizam had in 1798 dismissed his French officers and converted his French contingent into an English subsidiary force of six battalions. He now ceded all the lands apportioned to him from Mysore to pay for the upkeep of the former six battalions and of two fresh regiments. The Nizam was thus completely under English influence. Tipu, on whom Bajrao had counted as a possible ally if he quarrelled with his English friends, was dead, and the Hindu state that had arisen on the ruins of his government was bound to the English by the strongest ties of gratitude.

<sup>1</sup> Bowring, *Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan*, p. 202.

Even the territory that had been set aside for the Peshwa never became his. After protracted negotiations, during which the English and the Marathas successively rejected each other's proposals, it was divided between the English and the Nizam; but the Nizam gave back his share in it to the English as a further payment towards the upkeep of the subsidiary force. It was thus clear to every far-sighted observer that the English, at once lords of the rich lands of Bengal and in control of the whole vast country from the Vindhya to Rameshwaram, would in no long time be masters of the whole of India.

## CHAPTER LVI

### CIVIL WARS AND WARS AGAINST THE ENGLISH

AFAIRS in the Maratha state were rapidly drifting from bad to worse. The quarrelsome widows of Madhavrao Sindia had left Amritrao's camp for Kolhapur, where the raja espoused their cause. Lakwa Dada, a Shenvi by caste, and a skilful general in Sindia's service, had been confined by Daulatrao and had made his escape. He was now ravaging Sindia's provinces in central India. Jaswantrao Holkar had left Nagpur and, collecting a band of freebooters, was sweeping through Malwa. De Boigne had returned to France in 1796, and his successor, Perion, was quite unable to drive away the invaders. The raja of Kolhapur, as the protector of the turbulent widows, was at open war with the Peshwa. Chatursing, brother of the raja of Satara, successively defeated the *Pratimdu* and Parashrambhau Patwardhan, mortally wounding the latter in a fight at Pathankudi in the Chikodi taluka, although the legend that the raja of Kolhapur cut Parashrambhau to pieces with his own sword seems to be unfounded. To crown the misfortunes of the Maratha state, Nana Phadnavis died on March 13, 1800.

Ever since his confinement at Ahmadnagar, his health had been gradually failing. For some months before his death, he had hardly left his house, nevertheless his dauntless spirit enabled him still to attend to the needs of the administration. In January 1800, he began to suffer from intermittent attacks of fever. A fortnight before his death the Peshwa himself came to see him, but death was already stamped on the minister's countenance, and at midnight on March 13, 1800, he died amid the widespread grief of the Maratha people. 'With him', to use the words of Colonel Palmer, 'departed all the wisdom and moderation of the Maratha government.'

It cannot be denied that Nana Phadnavis was a great man, judged by almost any standard. It has been said that he lacked physical courage; but such a charge is easily brought and with difficulty refuted. It rests chiefly on Nana Phadnavis' refusal to join Parashrambhau Patwardhan in an attack on Sindia's army. But such an attack would have ended in certain defeat and to court certain defeat is not true valour. The minister's political courage and foresight have rarely been surpassed, and his life was spent in guarding the throne of his

young master. By the tragic irony of fate, he overshot his mark and by excessive care brought about indirectly the death of the young prince, whom he loved like his own son. In private life Nana Phadnavis was truthful and kindly, frugal and generous. His time was regulated with the utmost care, and the amount of business, both public and private, transacted by him far surpassed the limits of ordinary human capacity. Like Metternich, Nana Phadnavis was fond of the fair sex and in the course of his life he was married no less than nine times. On his death he left two widows, Bagabai and Jiubai; the former was fourteen years old and the latter only nine. He left no children, although his first wife had borne him a son and his third and his sixth wife had each borne him a daughter, but his children all died young. Bagabai died fourteen days after her husband's death. Thus all that survived of Nana Phadnavis' family was the little Jiubai. The funeral ceremonies of the great minister were marred by an untoward incident. The pay of his Arab guards was in arrears, so they manned the walls of his house and refused to allow anyone to enter or leave it. The Peshwa paid them off and discharged them, and then attached Nana Phadnavis' estates, forcing Jiubai to live in a room in the Shanwar palace. There she remained until Jaswantrao Holkar released her and sent her to Lohgad fort, which Dhondurao Ballal Nitsure, an officer of Nana Phadnavis, continued, in defiance of Bajirao to hold in the interests of his dead master. Two years later the English made her surrender Lohgad, but forced Bajirao to settle on her a yearly pension of twelve thousand rupees. She lived for sixteen years under English protection at Panvel. On the fall of Bajirao, Mountstuart Elphinstone invited her to Poona and gave her besides her pension the townships of Menvali and Belbag. In 1827, she adopted the youngest son of Ramakrishna Gangadhar Bhanu and gave him on adoption the name of Madhavrao. On the death of Jiubai her allowance was stopped, but the townships of Menvali and Belbag were continued by the English to Madhavrao and his descendants.

Both Sindia and Bajirao wished to seize the treasures of the deceased Nana Phadnavis. These, however, were never discovered. Mortified at his failure, Bajirao imprisoned Nana Phadnavis' friends and resolved to plunder the Patwardhans. In this plan the raja of Kolhapur readily joined, and the Patwardhan estate was soon stripped of everything worth carrying away, and their houses were all burnt. But the death of Nana Phadnavis, so far from freeing Bajirao from tutelage, only delivered him again into the bondage of Daulatrao Sindia. The Peshwa turned his attention to Jaswantrao Holkar. The latter, a man of great capacity, had contrived by a series of successes to raise a considerable army. The illegitimate son of Tukoji Holkar, he affected to be acting solely on behalf of Khanderao Holkar, his legitimate nephew confined in Poona. He invaded at Bajirao's suggestion Sindia's dominions, defeated and then bought over du Drenec and his disciplined regiments. Sindia was unwilling to leave Poona to meet this formidable adversary, for to do so was to give up his favoured position at the Poona court. But at last the situation became so serious that Sindia, after extracting forty-seven lakhs of

rupees from the reluctant Bajirao, marched northward to meet Jaswantrao. The latter won a brilliant victory near Ujjain, but was checked near Burhanpur and severely defeated near Indore.

Rich for the time being of Sindia, Bajirao indulged to the full in the pleasures of revenge. His victims were the families who had opposed his father. The most prominent was the Raste family. Mathavrao Raste was treacherously seized and imprisoned in Raygad, others less important were killed or thrown into dungeons. Vithoji Holkar, the other illegitimate son of Tukoji Holkar, and a friend of Nana Phadnavis, was captured near Bhamburda at the head of a body of horse. He was tied to the foot of an elephant and dragged about the streets of Poona until he died, while Bajirao gloated over his sufferings.<sup>1</sup> This act was not only a crime but an error. Jaswantrao, who had been deeply attached to Vithoji, abandoned his designs against Sindia and, vowing revenge, marched straight on Poona. Sindia sent Sadashivrao Bhaskar after him, but Jaswantrao Holkar skilfully evaded Sindia's troops and on October 23, 1802, encamped between Loni and Hadapsar, a few miles to the north-east of Poona. Sadashivrao effected a junction with such troops as the Peshwa could muster, and on October 25 a bloody battle was fought, in which Jaswantrao Holkar was completely victorious. Sindia's battalions disappointed their master, save four who had been once commanded by de Boigne. The spirit of that great soldier still animated them, and, just as they would have done had he been present in person, they stood their ground to the last, until cut to pieces by furious charges of cavalry led by Jaswantrao Holkar in person.

The Peshwa, who had taken no part in the battle, fled to Sinhgad on hearing its result, thence to Raygad, and finally to Mahad, whence he wrote to the English imploring their protection. When it was granted, he embarked on an English ship at Rewadanda and sailed to Bassein, which he reached on December 6. The flight of the Peshwa left the government of the Maratha state in the hands of Jaswantrao Holkar. Wise enough to know that a bastion of the house of Holkar could never hope to rule it in permanency, he sent for the Peshwa's adopted brother Amritrao and had him appointed Peshwa. Having settled the form of government, he devoted himself to the plunder of Poona. In this he showed such zeal that the inhabitants looked back almost with regret to the days of Sakharam Ghatge.

In the meantime Bajirao had resigned his independence to the English, by a document known as the Treaty of Bassein.<sup>2</sup> On March 25, 1803, the English, led by the greatest general of the age, Arthur Wellesley, assembled ten thousand strong on the northern frontier of Madras. To Wellesley's standard flocked the troops of several families who adhered to Bajirao's cause, notably the Patwardhans, Bapu Ganesh Gokhale, Appa Desai Nipani, the Patankars and Vinchurkar the grandson of Vithal Shivdev. On April 20, 1803,

<sup>1</sup> Vithoji's widow committed *sati* on the bank of the Mula river. A temple has been erected in her honour and has given her name to Holkar's bridge.

<sup>2</sup> See appendix.

General Wellesley entered Poona. It had been previously evacuated by Amritrao, to whom several of the important Maratha chiefs rallied. Sindia, who had fought for the Peshwa, deserted him now that he had sought the help of the English, and so, too, did Raghujī Bhosle. Jaswantrao Holkar, strangely enough, held aloof. He hated both the Peshwa and Sindia too much to join either of them.

The English had profited enormously by the conquest of Bengal and Mysore. Their Governor-General, Lord Mornington, had abilities hardly less inferior to those of his brother Arthur. The two brothers seized the opportunity and devoted the whole of their vast resources to make the English power paramount. The English field force was raised to no less than fifty thousand men, disciplined and led by English officers. The forces of Sindia and of Raghujī Bhosle were double that number, but only thirty thousand of them were regular infantry. The Nizam took no part in the struggle. Ill for a long time, he died on August 6, 1803, three days after the English had declared war on the Maratha confederacy, and his son Mirza Sikandar Jah was too busy making good his claims to the throne to take any part in the impending hostilities.

On August 10, 1803, General Wellesley opened the campaign by attacking the great fort of Ahmadnagar, and obtained its surrender on the 12th. On September 21, 1803, General Wellesley with a force of eight thousand men, of whom four thousand five hundred were English, came up near the village of Assaye with the forces of Sindia and Raghujī Bhosle, fifty thousand strong. Although General Wellesley was expecting the arrival of Colonel Stevenson with seven thousand men, with the inspiration of a great captain, he decided to attack the enemy in the face of tenfold odds. The Maratha troops were led by inexperienced commanders, who fled from the field very soon after the battle had joined. The cavalry followed the example of the commanders, but eight of de Boigne's old battalions and the Maratha artillery fought well. The battle of Assaye ended in a complete victory for the English, who took ninety-eight guns and a large number of prisoners. The battle of Assaye was followed by the capture of Burhanpur and Asirgad, one of the strongest fortresses in India. Raghujī Bhosle would not accept the defeat of Assaye as conclusive and encamped at Argaon together with a body of Sindia's cavalry, in the Akola district of Berar. On November 29, 1803, General Wellesley attacked Raghujī Bhosle's army and inflicted on it a defeat even more severe than Assaye. The fortress of Gavalgad in the Satpuras surrendered, and news reached Raghujī Bhosle that he had lost all his possessions in Bengal, which had been conquered by Colonel Harcourt between September 14, and October 14. These disasters convinced Raghujī Bhosle of the hopelessness of continuing the struggle; and on December 17, 1803, he signed the treaty of Devgaon. By it he ceded the province of Cuttack in Bengal and all his territories and revenues to the west of the river Wardha. He renounced all claims of *chauth* and *ghasdana* on the Nizam. He bound himself to engage no subject of any European or American country at war with the British, without the British consent.

In the meantime Sindia, too, had been suffering other disasters elsewhere. On August 29, 1803, a detachment under Colonel Woodington stormed Broach, and on September 17, 1803, took Champanir and the tremendous fortress of Pavangad. About the same time General Lake won several important successes in Hindustan. On September 4, he stormed with ten thousand men the fortress of Aligarh, an event that led to the desertion of General Perron and several other French officers in Sindia's service. The English army then marched on Delhi, where they came up with Sindia's army under an old officer of de Boigne called Bourquin who had been in turn a seaman, a cook, a manufacturer of fireworks and a soldier. The Maratha army was totally defeated. The French officers surrendered, and among the spoils of victory were the town of Delhi, the person of the poor, blind old Emperor Shah Alam, and the town and fortress of Agra with its treasure, arsenal and 162 cannon. There still remained of Sindia's armies a considerable fragment under du Drenec. General Lake sought him out, and on November 1, 1803, was fought the decisive battle of Laswari, wherein the remainder of Sindia's disciplined battalions were destroyed. Bandelkhand, too, had been invaded by Colonel Powell and completely reduced by October 13. This succession of calamities convinced Daulatrao Sindia that in submission lay his only hope. On December 30, 1803, he also abandoned the war. By the treaty of Surji Anjangaon he ceded his lands between the Jamna and the Ganges, and nearly all his territories in Rajputana. He surrendered the fortresses of Ahmadnagar and Broach, his claims for *chauth* and *ghasdana* on the emperor and the Nizam, and all his money demands on the Peshwa and the Gaikwad. This treaty was supplemented by the further treaty of Burhanpur, by which Sindia became a subordinate ally of the British (February 27, 1804).

Jaswantrao Holkar had remained neutral, not through any kindly feelings for the combatants, all of whom he disliked, but in the hope of making the best possible bargain by joining one side or the other at the most critical moment. His plans were confounded by the rapid successes of the English and, so far from making a profitable bargain, he began to fear for the safety of his own possessions. Nevertheless, had he maintained his neutrality, he would have survived the crisis. Unfortunately he lost his head: he executed three Englishmen in his service, Vickers, Dodd and Ryan, because they were unwilling to fight against their own countrymen. At last his conduct and his demands became so outrageous that the Governor-General ordered Generals Wellesley and Lake to attack him. It must be admitted that, if his statesmanship was short-sighted, his generalship was of a high order. Colonel Monson, who commanded five battalions of sepoys and three thousand irregular horse, had been detached to keep Jaswantrao in check, while General Lake in alliance with Daulatrao Sindia conquered his possessions in Gujarat. Colonel Monson ill-advisedly exceeded his instructions and entered Holkar's territories in central India by the Mukund Dara pass in Rajputana, some thirty miles to the south of Kotah. Having thus, to use the words of Arthur Wellesley, advanced without reason, he retreated in the same manner.

On July 7, he found that he had only two days' supplies left, and he started to go back the way he came. On July 8, he sent ahead his baggage and stores, and followed with his infantry, leaving the irregular horse as a rearguard. When the infantry were ten miles distant Jaswantrao Holkar suddenly fell on the irregular horse and destroyed them. On July 11, Colonel Monson's infantry were vigorously attacked in the Mukund Dara pass. Monson repulsed the attack and struggled on as far as Kotah. There he was refused admittance, but managed to struggle on to Kushalgarh, which he reached on August 25. There he rested for a night and eventually succeeded in fighting his way to Agra on August 31, but with the loss of his guns, his supplies and his baggage. General Lake with the promptitude of a skilful general sent reinforcements to Agra without delay. Jaswantrao Holkar, unable to take Agra, tried to seize the person of the emperor. Failing in this, he attempted to raid on a grand scale the territories of the East India Company. He was followed, pursued and forced to fight at Dig, where he was severely defeated. Some of his troops took refuge in Bharatpur, where they successfully resisted Lake's attempt to storm it.

The Jat raja, however, lost heart and on April 10 he sued for peace. Jaswantrao Holkar then, after an ineffectual effort to win Sindia to his cause, marched in September 1805 to the Sikh country, hoping to rouse them against the English. The Sikhs gave him neither men nor supplies, and Lord Lake with five regiments of cavalry and four battalions of infantry set out after him in full pursuit. On the banks of the Baas Jaswantrao Holkar sued for peace and on December 14, 1805, he was given very favourable terms. Nevertheless by binding himself never to engage Europeans in his service without the Company's leave, he, too, became a subordinate ally of the English. Jaswantrao's end is one that excites compassion. His defeats preyed upon his mind, and shortly after the signature of the treaty symptoms of insanity showed themselves. He murdered his nephew Khanderao and his brother Kashirao, and on October 20, 1811, died a raving lunatic. He was a brave, fearless man with no small capacity as a general. He could endure severe fatigue and great pain. In the hour of success, his energy was boundless, and he bore adversity with no little fortitude. On his death Malharao Holkar, a boy four years old, and the son of Jaswantrao by a concubine, was adopted by Tulsibai, the deceased's favourite mistress, and in the child's name Amir Khan, a leader of Pindaris, or irregulars, and ancestor of, the present Chief of Tonk, carried on the Holkar government.

## CHAPTER LVII

### THE REIGN OF BAJIRAO II

THE English had now become the foremost power in India and, had Bajirao been wise, he would have acquiesced in the position of a subordinate ally. After all they had high claims on his gratitude. But for them he would never have recovered Poona and the throne;



nevertheless, his feudatories had no sooner been reduced by the English than he began to intrigue with his feudatories against his protectors. At the same time he took advantage of his favoured position to concentrate his troops and to sequester the estates of some of the Maratha nobles. The first estate to come into his hands was that of the *Pratimdhū*, then quite a young man. The Peshwa induced the *Pratimdhū's* mother to confine her son in Mhaswad, a town in the Sātara district. The young man's mistress, a *telm*, or oil-seller, and a woman of great spirit, raised a band of followers and rescued him. The *Pratimdhū* then became an outlaw but was reduced by Bapu Gokhale, a nephew of Dhondupant Gokhale, a Chitpavan Brahman of Chiplun. Dhondupant had joined Parashurambhau Patwardhan in 1791, in the campaign against Tipu. He was killed in action in 1799. Of his two nephews, Appa fell beside his uncle. The other, Bapu Gokhale, was wounded, but served with General Wellesley in 1803, 1804 and 1805. He was killed at Ashta on February 17, 1818. His descendant, Sardar Gokhale, resides at Poona. The *Pratimdhū* was stripped of his estate save a small portion reserved for his bare maintenance. The Peshwa next tried to secure Savantvadi, which was at war with Kolhapur, but in this he was unsuccessful. He was more fortunate in securing the person of Baburao Phadke, the son of the gallant Hari Ballal Phadke. He confined Baburao in Bassein fort, where he died, and confiscated his property. Madhavrao Raste was his next victim. He was bound under the terms of his <sup>5</sup>self to furnish a fixed number of cavalry. He failed to do so and was deprived of his entire estate.

The Gaikvad's domain seemed to offer a fair field for the Peshwa's activities. It will be remembered that, on Damaji Gaikvad's death, first Govindrao was appointed his successor, an appointment that was subsequently set aside in favour of Fatehsing as regent for the imbecile Sayaji, who of all Damaji's sons had the best claim. On December 21, 1789, Fatehsing Gaikvad, a ruler of considerable talents, fell from the upper storey of his palace and died. Govindrao now felt certain that he would at least succeed to the regency, but he was once more disappointed and the Poona government appointed his brother Manaji. The latter agreed, as the price of the Peshwa's favour, to pay sixty lakhs in instalments spread over four years. On August 1, 1793, Manaji died and this time fortune smiled on Govindrao. Nana Phadnavis demanded as the price of his recognition the cession of all the Gaikvad's estates south of the Tapti river and his share in the Surat customs. This the English forbade, relying on the treaty of Salbai, which guaranteed the integrity of the Gaikvad's territories. On the other hand, the minister demanded Rs. 43,62,000 in cash, and extorted from Govindrao all the money, jewels and clothes in the palace of Baroda.

Govindrao was a man of little or no ability. He had a temper as vindictive as Bajirao's and, instead of governing his little principality properly, he spent his time paying off old scores. He turned out of office all Fatehsing's friends and put in their places Prabhus from Poona, of whom the most conspicuous were his new diwan, Ravaji

Appaji and his brother Babaji Appaji Govindrao Gaikwad was recognized as *Sena Khas Khel* and ruler of Baroda on December 19, 1793; but in the meantime his own illegitimate son Kanhoji had thrown himself into Baroda with two thousand Arab and six hundred Pathan mercenaries. After a short siege Kanhoji Gaikwad was betrayed by his own men and imprisoned. On Nana Phadnavis' death the Peshwa extended to Gujarat his vindictive hatred of the minister's agents. He deprived Aba Shelukar, Nana Phadnavis' nominee, of his post of deputy-governor of the Peshwa's lands in Gujarat, and appointed in his place Govindrao Gaikwad. This appointment added to the Gaikwad's revenues, but it also added to the Peshwa's claims against him. Govindrao died on September 19, 1800, and his state was once more plunged into disorder. He left four legitimate and seven illegitimate sons. His eldest legitimate son Anandrao succeeded, with Ravaji Appaji as his first minister. Anandrao was a man of feeble intellect and, to make matters worse, Kanhoji escaped from prison and, winning over his brother Anandrao, became the real ruler of the state. Ravaji Appaji appealed to the English, who gave him their support and by 1803 had restored order. These civil wars brought the finances of Baroda to the lowest ebb. The contending parties had engaged bands of Arab and Afghan mercenaries, and the East India Company required a substantial reward. They paid off the arrears of the mercenaries but, as payment for their services, they took the Gaikwad's share of the Surat *chauth*, the talukas in Surat known respectively as the Chaurasi pargana and the Athavasi, and they required the Gaikwad to subsidize in lieu of Arab mercenaries two thousand British sepoy and a battery of English artillery. To pay for the subsidized force, Anandrao Gaikwad on February 18, 1803, ceded Dholka, Nadiad, Vijapur and Kadi, lands worth annually Rs 7,80,000. For the arrears paid by the English to the Arab mercenaries, Anandrao pledged the revenues of the Baroda, Koral, Sinor, Petlad and Ahmadabad parganas.

Order had hardly been restored when a new personage appeared on the scene. Govindrao Gaikwad had for some reason devoted one of his younger sons, Fatehsing Gaikwad, to the service of the god Khandoba of Jejuri. In 1802, Fatehsing had been taken prisoner by Jaswantrao Holkar. In August 1803, he escaped and entered Gujarat at the head of a body of Pathans. He at first tried to seize Baroda but afterwards confined himself to a demand for fifty thousand rupees, his alleged ransom due to Jaswantrao Holkar.

On October 2, 1804, the Peshwa had renewed the lease of his Gujarat estates to the Gaikwad, but a rising of Kolis in February 1805, and further military aid from, and fresh cessions to, the English rendered the Gaikwad unable to pay Bajirao anything. To make matters worse Anandrao became completely unfit for the administration, and Fatehsing was given a share of it.<sup>1</sup> To the Peshwa's

<sup>1</sup> Before Fatehsing could be given a share of the administration he had to be freed from the god Khandoba. He was weighed against gold and silver.

demands he merely made frivolous counter-claims. The Peshwa thought the opportunity favourable for the resumption of at least a part of the Gaikwad's fief. The English had indeed previously objected, relying on the treaty of Salbai. But since then they had themselves occupied large tracts of the Gaikwad fief, so they would hardly press that objection again. As a preliminary he called on the Baroda government to send an agent to settle the accounts. Eventually it was agreed that the Baroda government should send as their envoy Gangadhar Shastri, an able man who had a large share of power. The English government, anxious that the dispute should be ended, guaranteed his safety. The Peshwa disliked Gangadhar Shastri, whom he believed to be a partisan of the English, and it was not until 1814 that the Peshwa agreed to receive him. In the meantime his agents were actively engaged in increasing the disorders of the Baroda state. The Peshwa received Gangadhar Shastri with his usual charm of manner and tried to win him to his cause, but the envoy would not betray his master's interests, and, after some months of fruitless negotiations, Gangadhar Shastri decided to return to Baroda and invite the arbitration of the English. To this course the Peshwa took the strongest exception, for the East India Company, already in occupation of a large share of Gujarat, could hardly be expected to be impartial. The Peshwa, as his last throw, offered to appoint Gangadhar Shastri as his own minister and to give the hand of his sister-in-law to Gangadhar's son. The envoy at first gladly accepted the proposed marriage, but afterwards he hesitated, for fear it might be thought of him that he was neglecting his master's interests for his own. This conduct, highly honourable to Gangadhar, was bitterly resented by the prince, who determined to revenge himself. He found a ready tool in one Trimbakji Dengle. This man had at one time been a common dispatch runner and had succeeded in attracting the Peshwa's favour, first by his speed as a runner and afterwards by his daring and ability. He disliked Gangadhar Shastri as a possible rival, in his master's affections and he devised the following scheme for his destruction. The Peshwa was going on a pilgrimage to Pandharpur, to be present on the great day when crowds from all parts of the Deccan go, carrying orange-coloured flags and on foot, to visit the god Krishna.<sup>1</sup> Trimbakji Dengle with the assent of Bajirao pressed Gangadhar Shastri to join the party. The flattered ambassador readily accepted the invitation and went with the Peshwa and his suite to the holy city. On July 14, the Peshwa asked Shastri to visit with him the temple of the god. Such an invitation it was impossible to refuse, for July 14 corresponded with the 11th of the bright half of the Hindu month of *Ashad*, the holiest day in the whole year. Gangadhar Shastri went to the temple, worshipped at Krishna's shrine, paid his respects to the Peshwa and started homewards. A few hundred yards farther on, at a spot still pointed out to the curious visitor, a band of cut-throats, hired by Trimbakji Dengle, fell on Shastri and cut him to pieces.

<sup>1</sup> See p 13.

The British government, which had guaranteed the safety of the envoy, was greatly incensed at his murder and demanded the surrender of Trimbakji Dingle. The Peshwa with great reluctance gave him up, and the miscreant was confined in Thana fort. He was closely guarded by the English soldiers, but Trimbakji was a bold, active man, and, with the Peshwa's secret assistance and the active help of a groom of one of the English officers, he escaped (September 12, 1816).

Having broken out of prison, Trimbakji Dingle began to collect troops under the orders of Bajirao, who was by now thoroughly tired of his English friends. With the Resident, Bajirao affected to be on the best of terms; but he was secretly negotiating with Sindia, the raja of Nagpur and Amir Khan, the Pindhari chief who controlled the Holkar government. The English Resident, Mountstuart-Elphinstone, complained about Trimbakji Dingle's levies, but the Peshwa pretended to ignore all his doings. The Resident then called on the Peshwa to act against an admitted rebel. Bajirao agreed, but did nothing. At last the Resident formally demanded the arrest of Trimbakji Dingle within one month, and the surrender of Sinhgad, Purandar and Raygad as pledges. Bajirao refused to comply until Elphinstone on May 8 surrounded Poona with British troops. He then made a virtue of necessity and signed what is known as the Treaty of Poona. He issued a proclamation for the arrest of Trimbakji Dingle, and surrendered the forts and several members of Dingle's family as hostages. That was not all. He agreed to have no communication with any foreign power, limited his territorial claims to the country between the Narbada and the Tungabhadra, and ceded land yielding annually thirty-four lakhs of rupees, instead of the military contingent that he was bound to furnish by the treaty of Bassein. The tract of ceded land included Ahmadnagar, Ahmadabad and the northern Konkan. He restored his estate to Madhavrao Raste and Mailghat to the Nizam. He resigned all his claims on the Gaikwad in return for four and a half lakhs a year.

Up to the time of this humiliating treaty, the Peshwa had felt jealousy of and dislike for the English. He now became consumed with hatred against them. At the same time the English government formed the resolve to establish its supremacy over India, if only to suppress the anarchy that was spreading like a cancer over the whole sub-continent. Thugs, Pindharies, bandits of every description, roamed unmolested, save by the English, over the length and breadth of the country; and as the lands became depopulated forests grew, and wild dog, tiger and panther dwelt in the fields once cultivated by human beings.

Bajirao, in order to deceive the Resident, had pretended to dismiss his troops by giving all of them leave on full pay. In July 1817, he went to Mahuli, the spot where King Shahu and Sakharbai had been burnt. There he met Sir John Malcolm, the political agent to the Governor-General, and completely misled him by his professions of love and goodwill towards the English. Malcolm obtained for Bajirao the restoration of the three ceded fortresses, Sinhgad, Purandar and

Raygad, and permission to raise troops and join in the expedition that the English government was contemplating against the Pindharies. Having obtained these indulgences, Bajirao stayed on at Mahuli and with Bapu Gokhale's help organized a fresh army. At the same time he tried actively to seduce the Indian troops of the English government, and in some cases the English officers. His conduct was soon known to Elphinstone, whose secret service was excellent. On October 19, the Peshwa celebrated the *Dasara* festival. The celebration was a splendid one, but the attitude of the Maratha troops towards the English was so threatening, and the reinforcements that the Peshwa called in so large, that on October 30, 1817, the Resident withdrew his troops to Khadki, or the Rocky Village, now known as the railway station of Kirkee. The Resident himself stayed on at his house, the Sangam, with a guard of two hundred and fifty men, but he ordered a light battalion and some auxiliary horse to come into Poona from Sirur, forty miles away. The Peshwa believed that the withdrawal of the English troops was due to fear, and resolved to overwhelm them before the reinforcement from Sirur could reach them. On November 5, 1817, Bapu Gokhale moved out of Poona with twenty-six thousand men. The Resident, seeing the Maratha advance, crossed the Mula river close to the Residency, and with his guard joined the main body of his troops at Kirkee. Directly Elphinstone had reached Kirkee, the little English army, which numbered only two thousand eight hundred men, marched under Colonel Burr to the attack. Bapu Gokhale opened the battle by sending six thousand cavalry to destroy the 1st battalion of the 7th Regiment, who in their eagerness to engage had advanced too far. Happily for the sepoys of the 7th, a deep quagmire unknown to either side protected their front. Just as the French cuirassiers fell headlong into the sunken road at Ohain, so the Maratha horse were hopelessly entangled in the swamp between them and their objective. As they strove to ride clear, the sepoys of the 7th Regiment poured volley after volley into them with appalling effect. The losses incurred were so heavy that Bapu Gokhale's plans were entirely upset. His army, which consisted largely of new levies, lost all spirit, and as the English advanced the Marathas fell back on Poona. Colonel Burr in turn fell back on Kirkee and awaited reinforcements. That evening the light battalion and the light horse from Sirur joined him. General Smith, who with the 4th Division had been in the Chandor Hills near Nasik, arrived on the evening of November 13, and on November 14 the English entered Poona without opposition, for Bajirao had fled to Satara, where he seized Pratapsing and several other members of the Bhosle family. On November 22, General Smith began the pursuit of the Peshwa. That unhappy prince now doubled back to join Trimbakji Dingle north of Junnar. General Smith followed him, but, fearing that the Maratha army might slip past him into the Konkan and overwhelm the small English detachment there under Colonel Prother, he directed Colonel Burr to send reinforcements to Colonel Prother and to call in from Sirur the 2nd battalion of the 1st Regiment. Colonel Burr acted on these instructions and, on receiving their orders, the 2nd battalion of the 1st Regiment, five

hundred strong and three hundred irregular horse, accompanied by two guns and twenty-four English artillerymen, set out for Poona at 8 p.m. on December 31, 1817. Their commander was Captain Francis Staunton. The troops marched all night and reached the high ground above the Bhima river about 10 a.m. Across its bed, almost dry in the cold weather, they saw twenty-five thousand Maratha cavalry awaiting them. Bajirao advancing on Poona had heard of the near approach of Staunton's detachment and had determined to intercept it. Captain Staunton made a skilful feint, as if about to cross the river, then suddenly turned and took post at Koregaon, a little village on the Bhima's eastern bank. It was surrounded by a low wall; and two temples, of Bahiroba and Maruti, to the west and a large house to the north-west formed convenient spots from which to enfilade an attack from the river. Captain Staunton posted his two guns, one to guard the road from Sirur and the other to guard an approach from the Bhima river. The Peshwa did not attack at once, but awaited the coming of five thousand picked infantry, who were some distance ahead.

On the arrival of the infantry the attack on Koregaon began. Three bodies of Arab and Maratha foot, each three hundred strong, crossed the Bhima river under cover of a shower of rockets and a vigorous cannonade. A feigned attack was at the same time made from the Sirur road. The Peshwa's infantry were not lacking in courage and by noon they had carried the two temples that were the main outworks of the village. The attacking columns were constantly reinforced and the single gun on the riverside was captured and eleven out of the twenty-four English artillerymen killed. The detachment fought with the greatest bravery, but the men had marched all night and were wholly without food, while four of their English officers—Wingate, Swanston, Pattinson and Conellan—lay dead or wounded on the ground. It seemed as if nothing could save the survivors and even the English artillerymen appealed to Staunton to surrender while they still could. But in the bosom of Staunton beat one of the bravest hearts that ever found a place within a human breast. While he lived, he said, there would be no surrender. His intrepid spirit fired the defenders and a moment later help came to them, as it were from beyond the grave. Pattinson, the adjutant of the 2nd battalion of the 1st Regiment, was one of those who lay wounded on the ground. He was a man of gigantic stature and, mortally stricken, he had been left for dead. At this supreme crisis his heroic spirit returned once more to its earthly tenement. His men, who idolized him, fancied that to save them he had come back from another world and followed him joyfully to the counter-attack. So inspired, it carried everything before it. In vain the Arabs refused to quit the captured gun. They were bayoneted where they stood. The gun was retaken and fired point blank into the advancing reinforcements. Pattinson was again shot down, but his men, uplifted by his example and the dauntless soul of their commander, successfully defended the hamlet until after dark. Next morning the attack was not renewed, and Captain Staunton the following evening marched back with his wounded and with his weary

but unbeaten detachment to Sirur<sup>1</sup>. He had achieved a great and enduring success. He had not only defended himself against odds of more than thirty to one; but he had broken the morale of the Maratha army. A grateful government showered honours upon him, but he did not live many years to enjoy them; and on June 25, 1825, Colonel Staunton, C.B., died off the Cape of Good Hope and was buried at sea. As their reward the 2nd battalion of the 1st Regiment were created grenadiers, as the 1st battalion of the same regiment had been for the defence of Mangalore. They still bear the name of Koregaon on their banner and they still celebrate with befitting revelry the immortal anniversary.

## CHAPTER LVIII

### THE END OF THE CHITPAVAN EPIC

FROM Koregaon Bajirao, deeply mortified, fled towards the south. There he all but met Monro. Hearing of Monro's vicinity, the Peshwa recrossed the Kistna, evaded General Smith and reached Sholapur. Generals Smith and Pritzler now met, and on February 7, 1818, their combined divisions gave up the pursuit of the Peshwa, and reduced the fort of Satara. First the English colours were hoisted and then the *Bhagwa Jhenda*, as it was intended to make Satara the capital of a new Bhosle kingdom. General Smith was then directed to renew the pursuit of the Peshwa and General Pritzler was appointed to reduce the Poona forts. On February 14, General Pritzler set out from Satara

<sup>1</sup> When Judge of Poona, I often visited Koregaon. The wall which Staunton defended so gallantly has disappeared, but the two temples, Maruti's and Bahiroba's, still stand. A tomb marks the spot where the English officers and men were buried. Across the Bhima, where the Peshwa watched the battle, the Bombay government has erected a triumphal column. On it are inscribed both in English and Marathi the names of the officers and men who fell in the action. Besides their names are also inscribed the following words:

This Column  
is erected to commemorate the defence of Koregaon  
by a detachment commanded by Captain  
Staunton of the Bombay Establishment  
which was surrounded on the 1st January, 1818,  
by the Peshwa's whole army under his  
personal command,  
and withstood throughout the day a series of  
the most obstinate  
and sanguinary assaults of his best troops.  
Captain Staunton  
under the most appalling circumstances,  
persevered in his desperate resistance,  
and, seconded by the unconquerable spirit of  
his detachment,  
at length achieved the signal discomfiture of  
the Enemy,  
and accomplished one of the proudest  
triumphs  
of the British Army in the East.

for Sinhgad. It resisted stoutly from February 24 to March 2, when it surrendered. On March 11, General Pritzler was in front of Purandar. After a three days' bombardment Purandar hoisted the white flag. In the meantime Chakan had fallen to another detachment on February 26, Visapur on March 4 and Lohgad on March 5. By May 3, General Pritzler had made himself master of every fort in the neighbourhood of Poona.

While his fortresses were falling one after another into the hands of General Pritzler, Bajirao himself was fleeing, without any definite plan, from General Smith. On February 19, Smith overtook the Maratha army at Ashta, a village in the Sholapur district, fifteen miles from Pandharpur. Bapu Gokhale was by this time sick unto death at the loss of his son in action,<sup>1</sup> at his master's taunts and at his country's calamities. He charged the 7th Regiment of British cavalry, as they were crossing a dry river-bed and, although he caused some disorder in their ranks, his command was in turn attacked by the 22nd Dragoons. Bapu met a soldier's death, being sabred in the fighting, while the unworthy Peshwa galloped off the field. The English captured a quantity of baggage and above all the raja of Satara, Pratap Singh, with his mother and brother. Shahu II had died on May 3, 1808, and his eldest son Pratapsingh had succeeded him. Chatursing, the gallant brother of Shahu II was still alive but a prisoner in Kanjuri fortress, eleven miles south-east of the town of Mahad. In 1812 he had been treacherously captured by Trimbakji Dengle.

The capture of the raja of Satara was of the utmost value to the English, for it enabled them to pose as fighting on behalf of the successor of the great king, and several of Bajirao's *jaghirdars*, including the Patwardhans, at once left his standard. Bajirao, hopeless of success and tortured by fears for his own safety, sought to take refuge in Nagpur. But he was not destined to find a shelter there. Mudhoji Bhosle had died on May 19, 1788, and had left, besides Raghuji, two sons, Khandoji and Vyankoji.<sup>2</sup> Raghuji, although the adopted son of Ranoji did not become the ruler of Nagpur until his natural father Mudhoji's death. Khandoji<sup>3</sup> died shortly after his father, and Vyankoji remained loyal to his brother, whom he predeceased. Raghuji died on March 22, 1816, leaving an idiot son called Parsoji. The only possible candidate for the regency was Vyankoji's son Mudhoji, whom it will be convenient to call by his better known name, Appa Sahib. He was a young man of some capacity and had commanded the Bhosle's troops at the battle of Argaon. To secure himself as regent Appa Sahib on May 27, 1816, signed a treaty with the English. He undertook to pay them annually Rs 7,50,000, as the cost of a regiment of cavalry and of six thousand infantry officered

<sup>1</sup> He had fallen in a skirmish in the hills a few days before and his wife had committed *seiti* (Peshwa's *Bakhar*).

<sup>2</sup> *Panipat Prakaran*, p. 282.

<sup>3</sup> Khandoji was also called Chimna Bapu and Vyankoji was also called Manya Bapu. Mudhoji, Vyankoji's son, was usually known as Appa Sahib.



by Englishmen. Appa Sahib also undertook himself to keep up three thousand cavalry and two thousand infantry. After the treaty had been signed, Appa Sahib established his authority over the Nagpur dominion. On February 2, 1817, he had his cousin Parsoji strangled and plunged actively into the anti-English intrigues of Bajirao. He concealed his treachery until the Peshwa's rupture with the English, when he prepared to destroy Jenkins, the Resident. The latter's force consisted of two and a half battalions of Madras infantry, two English regiments, three squadrons of Bengal cavalry and four guns. On November 26 was fought the battle of Sitabaldi hill, a low range, which separated the English Residency from Nagpur town. The English, although outnumbered by at least six to one, repulsed Appa Sahib's attack. His position was now hopeless, for English reinforcements kept pouring into Nagpur, and on December 15 the unlucky prince surrendered. Appa Sahib's army made some slight resistance, but by December 24 the war was over. Thus, long before Bajirao could have reached Nagpur, his hoped-for haven had fallen into the hands of his English enemies.<sup>1</sup>

Baulked of a shelter in Nagpur, the ill-fated Peshwa fled back to Kopargaon, the spot where he had passed his childhood and thence to Chanda. He was now being hunted down from all sides. Colonel Adams took Chanda by storm and when Bajirao escaped from it General Doveton took up the pursuit. At last, on June 3, 1818, the great grandson of Balaji Vishvanath surrendered to Sir John Malcolm at Mhow near Indore.

After the re-establishment in 1802 of Bajirao II at Poona, Amritrao had tried to make his peace with his adopted brother. But the foolish Peshwa neither forgot nor forgave and rejected all Amritrao's overtures. The latter then joined General Wellesley and was so fortunate as to obtain from the British government a pension of eight lakhs a year. He went to Benares, where he lived until his death in September 1824. Bajirao asked for and obtained from Sir John Malcolm a promise that his pension should not be less than Amritrao's, as the Company had proclaimed their intention of annexing his kingdom. The prince promised in return to help in the capture of Trimbakji Denge, a promise that he did not keep. This, however, was of little importance, as the fugitive was not long afterwards seized in Khandesh. Sir John Malcolm's promise was confirmed by the Governor-General, Lord Hastings, and Bajirao was asked where he would like to reside, as he could not be permitted to live in any part of his former possessions. The prince chose Brahmavarta or Bithur on the banks of the Ganges, and the Company bestowed the town on him in *jaghire*. A beautiful site about six miles in circumference was

<sup>1</sup> The subsequent treachery of Appa Sahib led to his arrest and imprisonment. On May 13, however, he escaped from prison and joined Chitu, a well-known guerilla leader. After carrying on a guerilla warfare for some months he sought the protection of the Sikhs. After his flight the widow of Raghuji was allowed to adopt Parsoji's minor son, who on adoption took the name of Raghuji also.

assigned for the Peshwa's residence, and its boundaries were marked by sixteen stone pillars. The Company appointed a special Resident to his court. His name was Captain Lowe. He was thus by a curious coincidence the namesake of the officer appointed to guard the far more eminent exile, who since 1815 had been eating his heart out at St. Helena. But there the resemblance ended. At Longwood petty persecution, hateful surroundings, an incommodious residence, the vicinity of an odious and narrow-minded jailer, embittered the last days of the greatest of Europe's rulers. At Bithur Bajirao was given the widest indulgence. An ample pension; a vast palace surrounded by a gigantic demesne and cooled by the breeze from India's mightiest river, consoled the last Peshwa for the loss of a power that he had never learnt properly to wield. It is no wonder that the behaviour of the captives differed as widely as the manner of their captivity. For six years Europe resounded with the complaints of the unfortunate Corsican. But so happily passed the years of the Bithur exile that history, English and Indian alike, has entirely forgotten the last part of his existence. Indeed there was little or nothing to record. Day after day of the exile's life glided by in a luxurious dream. He loved women, and on his palace walls hung vast mirrors framed in gold, which constantly reflected the rounded and charming forms of the most beautiful dancing-girls in Asia. His tables groaned beneath their massive load of plate. His park swarmed with every kind of deer and wild-fowl that India could furnish. Singers, either players, wrestlers, jugglers, strove with one another for the privilege of soothing the tedium of the most urbane of princes. And some eight thousand guardsmen, armed with every kind of useless weapon, recalled to Bajirao the days when his generals could lead thirty thousand men across the Mula river towards Kirkee.

Such was the curious mental standpoint of the Peshwa that, much as he loved pleasure, he yet loved religion still more. Bajirao experienced keenest joy when he distributed gifts and alms to pious Brahmans. From the Deccan and Benares, from Allahabad and Gwalior, indeed from every spot which on one ground or another had a claim to sanctity, there poured into Bithur a never-failing stream of learned but poverty-stricken savants. At Bithur, provided they knew Sanskrit—for the deposed prince was an excellent scholar—they were certain of a gift and a welcome. Much as Bajirao loved the society of his dancing-girls, he was even more deeply attached to the married state. While at Poona he married no less than six young ladies and five more while at Bithur, but his many marriages did not bring the Peshwa what he most desired, a son. His eldest wife, the Lady Waranashibai of the Phatak family, bore him a boy, but the child died within fifteen or twenty days of its birth. His sixth wife, the Lady Saraswatibai of the Pendse family, bore him two daughters. One of these two, Bayabai by name, married the son of Sardar Babasaheb Apte of Gwalior. She outlived her husband, was made a *sardar* of the Deccan and was alive until a few years ago. On June 6, 1827, Bajirao adopted Dhondupant, the son of one Madhavrao Narayan Bhat, a poor priest that lived at Venegaon near the Bhore ghat. Subsequently he

adopted Dhondupant's two brothers, Sadashivrao and Gangadharrao. Dhondupant was the Nana Sahib of the mutiny of 1857. Bajirao himself died in 1851 at the ripe age of eighty. At the time of his death he was on the most friendly terms with the English. On one occasion he lent the Company six lakhs of rupees. During the Sikh war he equipped at his own expense two regiments—one of infantry and one of cavalry—for the Company's service. In fact, the life that the Company compelled him to lead for over thirty years was probably the one best suited to his pleasure-loving nature. Once the first shock had passed, Bajirao probably regretted rarely, if ever, the loss of his unstable throne. He seems to have had none of the qualities that befit a ruler. He was physically timid, short-sighted in politics, treacherous and vacillating. His most remarkable quality was his exquisite charm of manner, and Sir James Mackintosh, at one time Recorder of Bombay, has left on record that he had met three sovereigns—George III, Napoleon I and Bajirao II—and that of the three he far preferred the sovereign of Poona.

In the meantime the reduction of Bajirao's other strong places had progressed rapidly. Vasota in the Koyna valley fell on April 5, and Badami and Sholapur fell in the same month. Raygad surrendered on May 7. The most obstinately defended of the Maratha forts was Malegaon in Khandesh. It fell on June 13.

The reduction of the country was followed by its settlement. To the old Maratha aristocracy, the contemporaries of the great king, the Company restored their lands in full. We have thus to this day the Nimbalkars of Phaltan, the Daphles of Jath, and the Ghorpades of Mudhol. To the Pant Sachiv of Bhor, the Pratinidhi of Aundh, and the Raja of Akalkot, all of whom had left the Peshwa's cause early, their entire jaghires were given back. The Patwardhans were treated with similar forbearance.

Bajirao had made every effort to win Daulatrao Sindia to his cause. He went even so far as to write him the following letter.

'Your father, Madhavrao Sindia, agreeably to the orders of the Sarkar, went to Delhi, was made a vizier and acquired a high reputation. He served us with his heart and soul. When you became his successor, you entered into an alliance with the English, thus you govern in Hindustan and thus you show us your gratitude. In thus serving us, it befits you to put bangles on your arms and sit down like a woman. After my power is destroyed, is it possible that yours should stand?'

Daulatrao Sindia felt Bajirao's reproaches deeply, but he remained loyal to the English alliance. In acting thus he showed the truest political wisdom and preserved his state intact for his successors. He died without either natural or adoptive heirs, and his widow, the famous Baizibai, the daughter of Sakharam Ghatge, adopted with the leave of the Governor-General a boy called Mugatrao Sindia, who on adoption took the name of Ali Jankojirao Sindia (June 27, 1827). Jankojirao Sindia died on February 7, 1843. His widow Tarabai adopted Bhagirathrao Sindia, who succeeded as Jayajirao. In the Mutiny Jayajirao Sindia remained loyal to the English, although his

troops revolted.<sup>o</sup> On June 20, 1886, Jayajirao Sindia died, leaving behind him a son, Madhavrao Sindia. This splendid prince ruled until 1925 over Sindia's dominions and the honours conferred on him are too numerous to record.<sup>1</sup>

The house of Holkar was not so fortunate as the house of Sindia. Instead of an experienced chief, the boy prince Malharrao was the nominal ruler, while the regent was Tulsibai, a former concubine of Jaswantrao, and the mistress and tool of Holkar's hereditary diwah, Ganpatrao. The result was that the Peshwa's party prevailed and war ensued with the English. On December 28, 1817, the army of Holkar attacked the English at Madhidpur and was completely defeated. The remains of Holkar's army were attacked by General Browne and destroyed on January 10, 1818, at Rampur. In the meantime Tulsibai had been murdered by her own troops, and on January 6, the young Holkar had made his peace with the English by the treaty of Mandasor and become their subordinate ally.

He gave up his lands south of the Narbada and abandoned all his claims over Rajputana, while the English undertook to maintain a sufficient field force to protect his state. This force still exists and is the Mhow garrison.

The English appointed a resident at Holkar's court, and Tatya Jogh became the boy prince's administrator. By 1826, when Tatya Jogh died, he had raised the state revenues to thirty lakhs. Malharrao Holkar died in 1833, at the age of twenty-eight, and was succeeded by Harirao, who died in 1843. His successor was Tukojirao Holkar II, a boy adopted by Ma Samba Kesaribai, one of Jaswantrao's widows. Tukojirao II remained loyal during the Mutiny, although his troops revolted, and protected at his own risk in his palace a number of Christians, English and Indian. He died in 1886, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Shivajirao. The latter's administration had little merit. In 1903 he abdicated in favour of his only son, M. H. the Maharajadhiraja Raja Rajeshwar Sawai Tukoji Holkar Bahadur.

The great state of Kolhapur was not only preserved intact, but increased in size. In 1772 Jijibai, the widow of Sambhaji of Kolhapur, died. She had administered the state since her husband's death in the name of her adopted son Shivaji. She died leaving him surrounded by enemies, and for ten years the state, attacked from all quarters, was on the brink of ruin. During the dissensions of the last Peshwa's court Shivaji, raja of Kolhapur, offered a shelter to Chaturising the brother of Shahu II, then raja of Satara. In 1799, Shivaji defeated and killed Parashrambhau Patwardhan<sup>2</sup> at Pattankudi. The latter's son Ramchandra retrieved his father's defeat and besieged

<sup>1</sup> The following are some of His Highness' titles: General His Highness Mukhtar-ul-Mulk, Azim-ul-Iktidar, Rafi-ush-Shan, Wala Shikoh, Mohtar Sham-i-Dauran, Umdat-ul-Umara, Maharaja Adhiraj, Ali Jah, Hisam-us-Sultanat, Maharaja Shrinath, Mansur-i-Ziman, Fidvi-i-Hazarat-i-Malika-i-Muazzana-i-Rafid-Din-Darja-i-Inglistan, G. C. S. I., G. C. V. O., LL. D., and A. D. C. to H. I. M. the King, Emperor (*Gwalior Gazetteer*).

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix for account of Parashrambhau's death.

Kolhapur, but on the death of Nana Phadnavis he was destroyed by Bijrao and forced to raise the siege after suffering heavy losses.

On April 24, 1812, Shivaji, raja of Kolhapur, died, leaving two sons, Shambhu and Shahaji. Shambhu succeeded to the throne and in 1817 loyally supported the English. He received in return for his help the districts of Chikodi and Manoli, for which he and the Patwardhans had been continually fighting. In 1821, Shambhu was murdered. He left an infant son who died soon afterwards. His brother Shivaji then succeeded. He died of cholera in 1837. His son Shivaji succeeded and ruled until 1866, remaining staunch to the English all through the Mutiny. He was followed on the throne by his adopted son Rajaram, a youth of rare promise, who unhappily died at Florence on November 30, 1870. His widow was allowed to adopt a son, who also took the name of Shiva. Unhappily his mind failed and he died at Ahmadnagar. On March 17, 1884, his widow adopted Yashwantrao, the eldest son of the chief of Kagal. After a long and prosperous reign, Sir Shahu Chatrapati, maharaja of Kolhapur, died loaded with every honour that His Majesty the King-Emperor could bestow on a loyal ally.

The Company's most interesting experiment was the creation of a kingdom for the heir of the great king. Under a treaty, dated September 25, 1818, Pratapsingh was formally installed as maharaja of Satara and ruler of a territory that included the whole of the present district of Satara except the sub-division of Tasgaon, which then belonged to a branch of the Patwardhans. Besides the Satara district the maharaja received the sub-divisions of Sangola, Malsiras and Pandharpur in Sholapur, the city of Bijapur and a considerable tract of land in its neighbourhood. To help the young chief with his advice the Government appointed Captain James Grant Duff, who will live in men's minds as the historian of the Marathas rather than as the Political Agent of Satara. So long as that able, learned, and sympathetic man was there to guide Pratapsingh all went well, and the relations between the maharaja and the Bombay government could hardly have been better. Grant Duff's successors lacked his tact and knowledge, and friction ensued, which a little patience and discretion on their part might have avoided. At last the maharaja seems to have been led by his attendants and hangers-on into ridiculous plots against the English government. On September 5, 1839, the Court of Directors took the serious step of deposing Pratapsingh and of putting in his place his younger brother Shahaji. Both Pratapsingh and Shahaji were excellent administrators, and probably in all India the English had no truer friend than the Maharaja Shahaji. During the Kabul War of 1841-2 Shahaji offered his troops to the English, and during the insurrection that spread through Kolhapur in 1845 he sent a contingent to assist the English to put it down. His expenditure on public works was munificent, and the bridges built by him across the Yenna and the Kistna are still admired by engineers. His palace is now the court-house of the judge of Satara, and the present writer, who for some time officiated in that office, can himself testify to the

noble proportions of the building. Had the maharaja asked the Governor-General for leave to adopt, his request could hardly have been refused.<sup>1</sup> Unhappily in March 1848 he was suddenly taken ill. There was no time to correspond with the Governor-General, and in the presence of Dr Murray, the Civil Surgeon, the dying maharaja adopted a boy named Vyankoji Bhosle of the house of Shedgoan, which traced its origin to Sharifu, the uncle of the great king. The Resident, Mr (afterwards Sir Bartle) Frere strongly pressed on the Bombay government the recognition of the adoption. Sir George Clerk, the Governor of Bombay, took the same view as the Resident. Unfortunately the Directors ruled otherwise and the East India Company took back the little kingdom that they had made over in gift.

While the Company thus regulated the future of the Deccan nobles, the settlement of the rest of the conquered territories engaged still more anxiously their attention. To describe in detail the administration of the Peshwa would be to go far beyond the scope of this work; but a sketch of its more salient features may not prove uninteresting. The basis on which the administrative pyramid rested was the village system. The headman of the village was called the *patil*. The post was hereditary and could be sold. But such was the honour in which it was held that no family sold it save when in the direst indigence. The *patils* were generally of ancient descent and could point to *vatanpatras* or deeds conferred on them by the emperors of Delhi or the rajas of Satara, and confirmed by the Peshwas. The *patil's* primary duty was to ascertain and to collect the government dues, to punish trifling offences, to redress wrongs, to maintain order and to settle the villagers' disputes. The more serious offences he referred to his superiors. Civil matters he referred to the *panchayat*, or council of village elders. The *patil* received a small stipend, but paid a *dahakpatti*, or tax, every twelfth year, equal to a year's salary, and the dignity that attached to his office was his real reward. Fined and imprisoned he sometimes was for neglect of duty, but he was seldom removed from his office save for treason or other serious crime.<sup>1</sup>

The *patil's* chief assistant was the village accountant or *kulkarni*. He was a Brahman, who could write up the village records and accounts. The most important state account books were five in number: (1) the general measurement and description of the village lands, (2) the list of the fields with the name, size and quality of each, the terms by which it was held, the name of the holder, the rent to which he had agreed, and the highest rent ever yielded by the field; (3) the list of all the villagers, whether cultivators or otherwise, with a statement of the dues from each to government, and the receipt and balance in the account of each; (4) the general statement of the instalments of revenue; and (5) the detailed account, in which each branch of revenue was shown under a separate head, with the receipts and balance of each. The administration paid the *kulkarni* either by

<sup>1</sup> My authorities for this passage are (1) Part 2 of the *Poona Gazetteer*, chapter viii, (2) Forrest, *Elphinstone* and (3) Colebrooke, *Life of Elphinstone*.

fees or by a grant of land; and he added to his official earnings by keeping the landholders' accounts, drawing up their agreements, and even writing their private letters.

Directly under the *patil* were the *bara balutas*, or twelve village servants: (1) the carpenter, (2) the blacksmith, (3) the washerman, (4) the barber, (5) the potter, (6) the silversmith, (7) the *gurav*, or idol-dresser, (8) the water-carrier, (9) the shoemaker, (10) the ropemaker, (11) the watchman, (12) the Musulman *mullah*. Besides these there were the Brahman astrologer and the Brahman priest.

(1) The carpenter kept in repair all wooden field tools, the landholder supplying the wood. He furnished the marriage stools on which the village bridegrooms and brides were bathed. He supplied travellers with pegs for their tents and for picketing their horses. His annual reward was two hundred sheaves of corn and twenty-four seers of grain for every thirty *bigas*<sup>1</sup> under tillage. He was also given his food while engaged in mending tools.

(2) The blacksmith made and mended sickles, hoes and other iron field tools, and the iron locks and chains with which the villagers secured their doors. He put tyres on cart-wheels and shod the horses of villagers and travellers. He received in lieu of salary eighteen seers of grain out of every thirty *bigas*.

(3) The washerman washed the clothes of male villagers; the women washing their own. He spread clothes for the bridegroom to walk on at marriage processions and for parties to sit on at marriages and other festivals. He received no grain allowance, but was paid by presents of money.

(4) The barber shaved the villagers once a fortnight on a lucky day and cut their nails. On holidays he kneaded the muscles and cracked the joints of the *patil* and *kulkarni*. He was at once the village surgeon and the village musician, playing on the fife and drum at weddings. When the bridegroom came to the village to take away the bride, the barber led his horse and received a turban as a reward. He trimmed the tail of oxen before the sowing season and was paid by presents of grain.

(5) The potter supplied the villagers with all their earthen vessels, their tiles and their bricks in return for their market price. At weddings he beat a drum and recited verses in honour of the goddess Parvati. At harvest festivals it was his duty to prepare a huge dish of *barabot*, or stewed mutton.

(6) The silversmith, or *totdar*, tested the coins paid in as taxes. For this duty he received a small salary from government, which he eked out by fashioning ornaments out of silver supplied by the villagers.

(7) The *gurav*, or idol-dresser, was the attendant of the village gods. Every morning he poured water over the images of Hanuman and Bahirū, marked their brows with sandalwood and oil, and dressed them with flowers. He swept the temples, neaped them with cowdung once every eighth day, and lit their lamps every night.

<sup>1</sup> A *biga* is rather less than an acre. Thus thirty *bigas* = 22½ acres.

(8) The water-carrier, a *koli* by caste, had to keep the drinking-vessels at the village office always full of water for the use of Hindus. He also supplied water to travellers at marriages and festivals. He lit the lamps every night at the village office, and every eight days neaped it with cowdung. If the village was on the bank of a river, he pointed out the ford to travellers. When the river was not fordable, he took passengers across on a raft, buoyed up by gourds and earthen pots.

(9) The shoemaker, or *chambhar*, made water-bags, and thongs for the cartmen's whips, mended shoes and bridles, and each year supplied the *patil* and *kulkarni* with a pair of new shoes. The skins of all sheep killed in the village were his perquisite, and like the carpenter, he received two hundred sheaves of corn and twenty-four seers of grain for every thirty *bigas* under cultivation.

(10) The ropemaker, or *mang*, made hemp ropes and hide ropes, muzzles for oxen treading the corn, castrated the bulls and carried out death sentences. He was an outcaste and was not allowed to live in the village.

(11) The watchman, or *mahar*, was also an outcaste, although somewhat higher in the social scale than a *mang*. He lived in the *maharvada* outside the village. He ran errands, kept in his head the boundaries of fields, so that he might settle boundary disputes, provided firewood on *Holi*, *Dasara* and *Diwali* festivals, and also carried at funerals the firewood for burning the dead. He had other duties too numerous to mention. In return the village *mahars* had a plot of land outside the village, and each family received forty sheaves of corn and four seers of grain for every thirty *bigas*. It was the *mahars'* duty to remove all dead animals from the village, and the carcasses were their perquisite.

(12) The *mullah* killed the sheep at sacrifices and festivals. He received petty allowances of grain and straw. He also enjoyed the plot of land attached to the village mosque.

The Brahman astrologer cast nativities, and the Brahman priest conducted the religious ceremonies.

Between the *patil*, or headman, and the government were the latter's representatives—the *subhedar*, or collector, and the *sarsubhedar*, or commissioner. The land revenue taken by Shivaji from Poona and its vicinity was fixed according to the *tankha*, the system introduced by Malik Ambar into the kingdom of Ahmadnagar. It was a low permanent settlement calculated at one-fourth of a good year's produce, and was levied by way of a lump sum on the whole village. As the price of money fell, the assessment fixed by Malik Ambar dropped to about one-seventh of the village output, and the administration imposed a variety of cesses, so as to increase the revenue. Balaji Bajirao's shrewd mind saw the wastefulness of this method of taxation, and he made a new settlement based on a fresh and elaborate measurement. His system was known as the *kamal*, and on an average doubled the contributions assigned to each village. To see that these contributions were not evaded, Balaji Bajirao created the offices of *subhedar* and *sarsubhedar*. As is still the case, the



*subheddar's* office was harder worked and more responsible than that of his nominal superior.

The *subheddar's* salary was calculated at one per cent on the revenue of his charge and varied from five to six thousand rupees a year. He was appointed from year to year, and he had to pay in advance to government the *kamal* assessment due from the villages in his charge. Sometimes he appointed subordinates of his own, known as *mamlatdars*, sometimes he himself went to the villages under him and ascertained how much land was likely to be cultivated during the year. To watch and safeguard his interests he appointed *kamavisdars* and *karkuns*, whose duties corresponded with those of circle inspectors and *talatis*. In conjunction with the *patils* he checked the sum due from each village and left its collection to them. The revenue was collected sometimes in three, sometimes in four instalments; when the instalment fell due the *subheddar* sent a messenger to warn the headman. The latter summoned the villagers, who paid in their dues one after another. As they did so, the village silversmith tested their coins and the accountant granted them a receipt. When the total had been collected, the *patil* sent it by a *mahar* and the *chaughula*, or assistant *patil*, together with a letter, to the *subheddar*. The interests of the government were watched by a set of hereditary officials, known as the *diwan* or minister, the *phadnavis* or registrar, and the *potnis* or treasurer. They were expected to report any evil deeds done by the *subheddar*. The interests of the villagers were watched by the *deshmukh* and *deshpande*, hereditary officers whose original duties had been to a large extent usurped by the *subheddar*. This system worked at its best during the regency of Nana Phadnavis, whose untiring brain found no toil too arduous and no detail too minute.

After the treaty of Bassein, Bajirao II, secured from foreign invasion and internal disorders by British protection, found the superintendence of the state revenues too serious an encroachment on his daily pleasures. For Balaji's *kamal* system he substituted the practice of farming the revenue for short terms to the highest bidder. This practice was not without its advantages. It relieved the central government of a vast and unceasing labour, and it shifted on to the revenue farmer and the villagers all losses caused by floods or drought. On the other hand all intercourse between the villagers and government ceased, and the former became the victims of greedy and unscrupulous contractors. In their anger they were loud in their complaints against the pleasure-loving prince, who no longer protected them. It must not, however, be supposed that the English found the Peshwa's dominion a waste and ruined land. In spite of the faulty method of taxation, British protection and uninterrupted trade with Bombay had enabled the cultivators to recover from Holkar's invasion, and the Peshwa before his downfall had accumulated more than five crores of rupees. The English had the double advantage of displacing an unpopular government and of assuming charge of a prosperous country.<sup>1</sup>

See 'Elphinstone's Proclamation at Satara (Forrest, *Elphinstone*, p. 53).

The administration of the conquered provinces was entrusted to Mountstuart Elphinstone, the former Resident at Poona. It was first intended that the new acquisitions should form part of the Presidency of Bengal; but in 1819, Lord Hastings, upon Elphinstone's nomination to the Governorship of Bombay, resolved to incorporate them in that presidency, the size and dignity of which were thereby greatly increased.<sup>1</sup> The decision was a fortunate one not only for Bombay but for the Deccan, which thus continued under the wise and sympathetic rule of the former envoy.

The conquest had been achieved with little difficulty because of the general indifference of the Maratha population, but none knew better than Elphinstone the dangers that lay ahead. It was unlikely that the queenly city on the banks of the Muta river would cease to brood over the days when her victorious armies brought back in triumph through her gates the captured flags of Delhi, of Portugal, and of England, and when in her palaces treaties were signed that shook thrones on the Jamna, and fortresses on the Cauvery. She was the capital of a proud and warlike people, who, if by any cause united, might prolong a guerilla war of independence for so many years that the East India Company might through sheer weariness return to them their freedom. There were two innovations that Elphinstone especially dreaded—the establishment of English law courts and the attempt to spread Christianity. It is difficult at the present time fully to understand the hatred with which even in England the English law courts were regarded; but the phrase 'In Chancery', still applied in boxing circles to the worst position in which a pugilist can find himself, may help to give the modern reader some idea of the popular antagonism. The English lawyers had evolved so intricate and unintelligible a system that Bentham, not without justice, compared the common law of England to a poisonous parasite fastened to an oak and asserted that it was stifling the very life out of the country to which it clung. By the exercise of caution and a determination never to invoke legal aid, an Englishman might hope to escape the perils of his own jurisprudence. But the unfortunate Indian had no such safeguard. He understood far less of English law than the Englishman, and he was so misguided as to think that from its provisions he might obtain justice. He was soon disillusioned on that score. The Company's courts in Bengal, partly because of the laws that they administered, partly also because of the incompetence of the judges appointed to preside over them, became mere centres of chicanery, barratry and corruption. The Indian who was so unfortunate as to get entangled in a law-suit might deem himself lucky if, with a single rag to cover his nakedness, he lived long enough to see its conclusion. The popular horror of this terrible legal system spread from Bengal all over the peninsula, until at last a traveller in upper India, riding through a village, saw its population fleeing panic-stricken into the jungle. He assumed that they dreaded the expected arrival of 'Bake's

<sup>1</sup> See Lord Hastings' letter to Elphinstone, dated 2 July 1819, in Colebrooke. *Elphinstone*, Vol. II, p. 102.

forces. The peasants assured him that it was not so. It was something much worse. It was the *adalat* that was coming. They could have borne with stoic resignation the approach of British arms, but they were fleeing, shrieking and unmanned, at the rumoured advent of British justice.<sup>1</sup>

Any active attempt to convert the Marathas to Christianity Elphinstone feared more. It was not that he doubted its truths; but he realized that any effort to force a new religion on the most orthodox among Hindus would unite the entire nation against its foreign rulers. It is impossible to state his views better than he himself has done in a passage quoted by his biographer Colebrooke (Vol. II, p. 95) —

'I have left out of account the dangers to which we should be exposed by any attempt to interfere with the religious prejudices of the natives. These are so obvious that we may hope they will never be braved. The number and physical force of the natives are evidently incalculably greater than ours. Our strength consists in the want of energy and the disunion of our enemies. There is but one talisman that, while it animated and united them all, would leave us without a single adherent. This talisman is the name of religion. I do not point out the danger now from any apprehension that Government will ever attempt to convert the natives, but to impress upon it the consequences that would result from any suspicion that it was disposed to encourage such a project. While we enjoy the confidence of the natives our boldest innovations are safe, but, that once lost, our most cautious measures would involve us in danger. It would not then be necessary that we should go so far as we do now, the most indifferent action would suffice to excite that fanatical spirit, the springs of which are as obscure as its effects are tremendous.'

Both the dangers that Elphinstone dreaded were happily averted. The religious danger proved illusory, for no attempt was made to convert the Marathas. The legal peril proved more real. As commissioner for the conquered provinces and afterwards as Governor of Bombay, Elphinstone retained so far as he could the old principles of administration. The chiefs and principal *sardars* were given full criminal and civil jurisdiction over their estates. *Subhedars* he converted into collectors, borrowing the name from Madras. He made them not only revenue officials, but gave them also jurisdiction as judges and control over the police. Subordinate to the collectors, he appointed *mamlatdars* in charge of sub-divisions. The collectors and assistant collectors were Englishmen; the *mamlatdars* were either Deccan Brahmins or officials from Madras. He pressed upon the collectors to leave, so far as possible, civil litigation to the *panchayats* or councils of village elders. In towns the arbitrators were paid officials called *amins*. Important questions of law were referred through the commissioner to expert Hindu scholars known as *shastris*. This system worked admirably, but was regarded with jealous eyes by the English lawyers of Bombay. Matters came to a head in 1823,

<sup>1</sup> See Colebrooke, *Elphinstone*, Vol. II, p. 131.

when a Supreme Court was created to take the place of the old Recorder's Court. Almost from its creation it sought to extend its jurisdiction. But Elphinstone steadfastly resisted its encroachments, and his successor, Sir John Malcolm, after a long and acrimonious dispute with the Chief Justice, Sir Peter Grant, obtained the approval of the law officers of the Crown to his predecessor's policy. As time passed the evils of the English law courts brought about their own remedy. Even the insular arrogance of the English Bar could not indefinitely ignore the fact that many countries on the Continent enjoyed an admirable jurisprudence, created by the genius and industry of the First Consul. Indeed it became clear that the choice lay between a reform of the laws and the adoption of the Code Napoléon. The latter alternative was so repugnant to the jurists of England, that they were driven to adopt the former. To do them credit, they were equal to the occasion, and the noble labours of Eldon, Brougham and a host of fellow-workers produced the still imperfect, yet practical and intelligible system, on which have been founded the Indian codes of to-day. While the laws became simpler, the Maratha nation became more accustomed to English ways of thought. The existing courts of law were introduced with the approval of the people; and the strongest proof of Elphinstone's wisdom is the entire absence to-day of any animosity against either the established law courts or the Christian religion.

It was impossible to continue farming the land as Bajrao had done, so it was decided to revert to the old method in which the revenue officers of the Government settled the assessment of each village in conclave with the village headman. This was done yearly by the *mamlatdars* in conjunction with or under the supervision of the collector. But the *mamlatdars* were often venal, and the collectors had not the necessary knowledge or time to check their frauds. It was, therefore, decided to survey and assess the Deccan, village by village, on a permanent basis. With this object Pringle, Assistant Collector of Poona, was in 1825 appointed to survey and revise the assessment of Poona district. This was the beginning of the first great survey settlement, still well known as Pringle's Survey.

The police also engaged the attention of this great administrator. In the Peshwa's times the *patil* was the unit of the police force. He was responsible for law and order in his village. He was helped by the *chaughula*, the *kulkarni*, and generally by the main body of the villagers. But his chief resource lay in the village watchman, or *mahar*. It was the latter's duty to keep watch at night, scrutinize strangers, and report suspicious individuals to the *patil*. When a theft was committed, it was the *mahar's* duty to detect the thief. And, as he was always moving about the village either to collect his share of grain or his fees, there was little therein that escaped his observation. He was also a skilled tracker and could often follow the footsteps of the criminal to his home or hiding-place. If the thief's footprints led to another village, the watchmen of that village had to take up the pursuit, and the last village to which the footprints could be traced was held responsible for the losses caused by the thief. Over the

headman was the *subhedar*, who kept up a force of *sibbandis*, or irregular infantry, and a small body of irregular horse. They were, however, intended to oppose violence rather than to detect crime. This system, rudimentary although it seems, worked admirably until the times of Bajirao II, when the disorders of the kingdom strained it to breaking point. To remedy the weakness of the district police, Bajirao created a body of officials known as *tapasnavises*, who corresponded with the modern Criminal Investigation Department, and whose duty was not only to detect crime, but to prevent it by superior vigilance. This arrangement worked well and, as Elphinstone has admitted, violent crimes were rare and few complaints reached him of the insecurity of property.

For the Maratha system, Elphinstone substituted bodies of district police, both mounted and unmounted<sup>1</sup> commanded by English officers and controlled by the collector. Out of these bodies of district police has grown the admirable and loyal force that is now under the orders of the Inspector-General. Yet many years of strenuous toil were needed before the Superintendents of Police appointed by Elphinstone reached the standard of efficiency reached in the days of the Peshwas. The result of Elphinstone's reforms cannot be better appraised than in his own modest language:

'To sum up the effects of our revenue, police and judicial systems, we have in revenue lighter and more equal and more certain assessment, less speculation and consequently less profit to the agents of Government. In police more attention and more vigour and, so far, less efficiency. In civil justice, the great change is that Government has taken on itself the whole responsibility of protecting people's rights, but there is more form, more system, more scruples, more trials, more acquittals, more certain punishment for all crimes except robbery, and for that less certain and severe.'<sup>1</sup>

Just as the roads built by Marshal Wade to connect the lowlands with the highlands did more than anything else to bring together the plainsmen and hillmen of Scotland, so perhaps the chief factor in accustoming the Maratha people to the rule of an English king was the great road up the Bhor ghat from Bombay to Poona. It was projected by Elphinstone, but was not completed during his governorship. In course of time the railway was added to the carriage road, and the passenger who now travels in three and a half hours from Poona to Bombay or from Bombay to Poona finds it difficult, if not impossible, to believe that little more than a hundred years ago the only highway between the English and the Maratha capitals was a steep and stony cart track, soaked repeatedly with the blood of contending armies.

This brings me, somewhat abruptly perhaps, to the end of the task that I began eleven years ago. I have endeavoured, however feebly, to trace the history of a great people from the earliest times to their conquest by a foreign power. I have shown how, largely through a religious movement, they were able, while under the yoke of Delhi, to

<sup>1</sup> Forrest, *Elphinstone*, p. 372.

maintain their national feeling and customs. The rise of an almost superhuman genius enabled them to throw off the Musulman yoke and become aggressors in turn. The structure erected by Shivaji was shaken to the ground, not by the arms of an invader but, by the domestic quarrels of his successors. But the country that had given birth to the great king was not yet exhausted, and the house of Bhat rebuilt on its old foundations the fallen edifice. As time passed, the Chitpavan prince-ministers were ruined by the same cause as the Maratha kings had been, namely, their own family disputes. As the power of their rulers waxed or waned the fortunes of the Maratha people rose and fell, until at last they lost their independence, for, as it was once said in the greatest of all epic poems

'It is the king that createth the *Krita*, the *Treuta*, the *Dwapara*, and the *Kali* age; for it is the king who is the cause of the era, and not the era the cause of the king.'

But in becoming the subjects of an English monarch, the Maratha people did not lose the qualities that had made them the foremost nation in India. Of them is Sir Ramkrishna Bhandharkar, the greatest archaeologist of his time. Of them also were Gokhale, the first of Indian orators, Telang, the most eloquent of Indian advocates, and Apte, the most charming of Indian novelists; so too were Ranade and Chandavarkar conspicuous among Indian judges. Under English officers the Maratha regiments have repeatedly proved their worth. They stopped the rush of the Soudanese Arabs at MacNeill's zariba. And, so long as the Indian army endures, its officers will remember with gratitude the valour of the Maratha sepoys in the many battles, fought in Iraq on the banks of the Tigris, and on the banks of the Euphrates. In commerce, it must be admitted, the Marathas have not prospered as their friends could have wished. The trade of Bombay is in the hands of Gujaratis, once the spoil of their bow and spear, and thousands of Maratha peasants toil daily in the mills to swell the profits of millionaires from Broach, Ahmadabad and Surat. We can only hope that in no distant time the earnings of Maratha workers may go into Maratha hands. But that is in the future, and of the future no man can tell. The time has come for me to lay down my pen. I lay it down with regret, but lay it down I must; for alike are over the epic of the Bhosles and the epic of the Chitpavans

Stop!—for thy tread is on an empire's dust!  
 An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below!  
 Is the spot mark'd with no colossal bust?  
 Nor column trophied for triumphal show?  
 None; but the moral's truth tells simpler so,  
 As the ground was before, thus let it be,—  
 How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Mahabharata* Udhogparva.

<sup>2</sup> *Child's Harbid.*



## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER I

### TEXT OF TREATY BETWEEN DELHI AND BIJAPUR

(1) Adil Shah, the king of Bijapur, must acknowledge the overlordship of the emperor and promise to obey his orders in future.

(2) The pretence of a Nizam Shahi kingdom must be ended and all its territories divided between the emperor and the Bijapur king. Adil Shah must not violate the new imperial frontier nor let his servants under the Moghul officers in occupying and settling the newly annexed districts.

(3) The king of Bijapur was to retain all his ancestral territory, with the following additions from the Ahmadnagar kingdom in the west, the Sholapur and Wangi Mahals, between the Bhima and the Sina rivers, including the forts of Sholapur and Parenda, in the north-east, the *parganas* of Bhalki and Chidgupa, and that portion of the Konkan which had once belonged to the Nizam Shahis, including the Poona and Chakan districts. These acquisitions comprised 59 *parganas* and yielded a revenue of twenty lakhs of *hons* or eighty lakhs of rupees. The rest of the Nizam Shahi kingdom was to be recognized as annexed to the empire beyond question or doubt.

(4) Adil Shah must pay the emperor a peace-offering of twenty lakhs of rupees in cash and kind. But no annual tribute was imposed.

(5) Golconda being now a state under imperial protection, Adil Shah must in future treat it with friendship, respect its frontier and never demand costly presents from the king, to whom he must behave like an elder brother.

(6) Each side undertook not to seduce the officers of the other from their master's service, nor to entertain deserters, and Shah Jehan promised for himself and his sons that the Bijapur king would never be called upon to transfer any of his officers to the imperial service.

(7) Shahaji Bhosle, who had set up a princeling of the house of Nizam Shah, should not be admitted to office under Bijapur, unless he ceded Junna, Trimbak and the other forts still in his hands to Shah Jehan. If he declined he was not to be harboured in Bijapur territory nor even allowed to enter it.

## APPENDIXES TO CHAPTER IV

### SHAH JEHAN'S LETTER TO SHAHAJI

[After compliments]

'Shahaji Bhosle, be it known that the application sent by your son Shivaji has come before us. Since it contained expressions of sincerity and homage we bestowed upon it our royal favour. He made a representation to us in the matter of your offences and your release. Our victorious and world-protecting standards are now successfully turned towards our imperial court. We assure you of our favour and we order that your faithful heart should be at ease in all matters. When we reach the imperial court we will bring to our sacred notice all your requests and desires and will bring them to success. But the proper way of service and devotion is to send your own trusted servant, so that the world-compelling order guaranteed and adorned with the royal signature may be issued and sent with him.

Your son Sambhaji and others have also obtained royal favour. They will be gratified by their former appointments and favours. They should strive in all good faith and true servitude, which will secure them all objects and requests. Be free from anxiety. A dress of honour has been sent to you as a mark of our complete favour and approval. We hope that by its good-omened arrival



you will become fortunate and you will understand from it that you are the object of the imperial condescension.'

Written 5 Jilkad, 23rd year of the reign (1049). Seal of Murad Baksh, son of Shah Jehan.

### SHAH JEHAN'S LETTER TO SHIVAJI

30 November 1649

'Deserving every kind of friendly feeling, recipient of great favour, worthy of magnanimous treatment, Shivaji Bhosle, imploring for imperial favour, be it understood, that your letter with Ragho Pandit has been received and has satisfied us. There appears in it a reference to the Junnar and Ahmदनगर *deshmukhi*, to which we have to say that you should be at ease about this. When we reach the royal camp in person, everything will be arranged satisfactorily.'

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION OF THE AFZUL KHAN INCIDENT

The account given by me of the Pratapgad battle differs so widely from that given by Grant Duff, that I think it necessary to go into the matter more carefully than I could do in the course of the chapter, for fear of spoiling the narrative.

In Grant Duff's story, Shivaji is made to bribe Afzul Khan's envoy, Pantoji Gopinath, and with his help to lead Afzul Khan into a trap deliberately laid for him and treacherously to murder him. With all deference to that learned and eminent writer, I cannot but think that on this occasion he has been less than fair to Shivaji. Pantoji Gopinath was Shivaji's officer and not Afzul Khan's. The bestowal therefore on him of Hivare village was not a bribe at all and could not have influenced the real envoy, Krishnaji Bhaskar. The story of Shivaji's treachery was taken by Grant Duff from Khafi Khan. Now Khafi Khan's account should in my opinion be wholly discarded. His bias against Shivaji is such that he never speaks of him except as 'that vile infidel' or 'that hell-dog'. His description of the scene too is ridiculous. According to him, Shivaji begged forgiveness in abject terms and 'with limbs trembling and crouching'. If Shivaji had thus overacted his part, he would certainly have roused suspicion in the Khan's mind. Again Khafi Khan's story could not have been based on any eyewitness's evidence. All the Muslims near enough to see what happened died with Afzul Khan. It may of course be said that if Khafi Khan's account should be rejected on account of his bias, so should the *bakhars*. But this is not so. Owing to a curious mental attitude of the writers of the *bakhars*, they have gone out of their way to impute unscrupulous acts to Shivaji in the belief that thereby they proved his cleverness and subtlety. It is certain that if Krishnaji Anant Sabhasad, the author of the *Sabhasad Bakhari*, had believed that Shivaji had begun the attack on Afzul Khan, he would have gloried in the act. Now both this *Bakhari* and the *Shivajigunaya Bakhari* agree that it was Afzul Khan who was guilty of the first treacherous attack. In this they are supported by the *Shedgavkar* and *Chitnis Bakhars* and by the *Afzul Khan Ballad*. Indeed Grant Duff has later admitted that all the Hindu authorities lay the blame of the attack on Afzul Khan. But he has not given any reasons for rejecting them in favour of Khafi Khan's account. To my mind, however, there is no conclusive ground for preferring them to the Muslim historian. There is a passage in the *Life of Ramdas* by his pupil Hanmant in which the latter, a contemporary of Shivaji, writes that at their first meeting after the death of Afzul Khan, the king spoke to Ramdas as follows:— 'When at our interview Abdulla (i.e. Afzul Khan) caught me under his arm, I was not in my senses and but for the *Swami's* blessing I could not have escaped from his grip.' Now had Shivaji torn Afzul Khan's stomach open with his *waghnaikh* and stabbed him with his dagger, he would have been in no danger and would have needed no blessing. A man as badly wounded as Afzul Khan had been was bound to collapse in a minute or two. From this it follows that Afzul Khan must have seized Shivaji when unwounded. It was, therefore, Afzul Khan and not Shivaji who was guilty of treachery.

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VI

## SHIVAJI'S LETTER TO SHAHAJI

' In your last letter you wrote to me as follows

" Far from helping the cause of his faith, Bajji Ghorpade of Mudhol became party to the insidious schemes of the Mohammedans and Turks, and by foul and treacherous means he brought us to Bijapur. What terrible danger faced us there you well know. It seems that the Almighty has in his infinite wisdom decided to carry out your aspirations, to establish the Maratha power and protect the Hindû religion. Therefore it was that the peril was averted.

" At present, inspired by malignant motives, Khawas Khan has marched against you, and ready to serve him Bajji Ghorpade of Mudhol and Lakham Savant and Khem Savant are with him. May God Shankar (Shiva) and Goddess Bhavani grant success to you.

" Now it is our desire that we should be fully revenged upon them and as we are fortunate to have such an obedient son, ready to carry out the wishes of his father, we command you to do this work. Bajji Ghorpade has gone ahead to Mudhol with his men."

' On hearing this from you, we went with an army to Mudhol, left the territory in ruin and took his *thanas* (garrisons). On learning this, Bajji Ghorpade gave battle to us, in which he with other notable men fell. It was a great battle. We marched up and down the country and plundered it. Our gain on this occasion was enormous. We then proclaimed peace and brought the territory under our control. At this time Khawas Khan was coming upon us. With our army we fell upon him, defeating him and turning him back sad and despondent to Bijapur. Our next work was to crush the Savants. Fort after fort came into our possession. On we went, completely devastating their territory. They ceased to receive help from Goa, but the *killedars* of Phonda fought for them. By means of explosives, we blew up one of the bastions of the fort. Thus we became masters of their territory.

' We next turned our arms against the Portuguese and took a part of their territory. They sued for peace and presented us with guns. The Savants could no longer consider themselves safe in Portuguese territory. For they sent one Pitambar as their *rakul* to us. "We are," they pleaded, "likewise the descendants of the house of Bhosle and you ought to care for our interest. You should take half the revenue of our possessions and the other half we shall devote to the expense of our troops with which we shall serve you." Their requests are granted. Thus it is by your blessings that everything ended as you desired and I have great pleasure in submitting this account to you.'

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VIII

## AURANGZIB'S LETTER TO SHIVAJI

26 August 1665

[After compliments]

'Your present letter, couched in very humble strain, giving the account of your interview with Raja Jai Singh has been received.

'We are glad to note that you desire a general pardon for your conduct. Your wishes had already been communicated to us by your officials, namely that you repent for your past deeds and that you surrender thirty forts to them and will retain twelve forts only with the adjoining territory, yielding in revenue one lakh of *pagodas*. In addition to these twelve forts which formerly belonged to the Nizam Shahi government, you wish to retain another tract in the Konkan with a revenue of four lakhs of *pagodas*, that you have taken from the Bijapur government and another tract under Bale Ghat in Bijapur territory with a revenue of five lakhs of *pagodas*. You want a charter from us to this effect and you agree to pay to us forty lakhs of *pagodas* in annual instalments of three lakhs.

'Our reply is that the policy pursued by you has been so unscrupulous that it does not deserve forgiveness. Nevertheless at Raja Jai Singh's recommendation we extend to you a general pardon and allow you to retain, as you wish, twelve forts detailed below.

'The adjoining territory has also been granted to you. But out of the nine lakhs of territory, that part which is in the Konkan and yields four lakhs and is at present in your possession has been annexed to our empire. As for the other, with a revenue of five lakhs, it will be given you subject to two conditions :

'(1) You must recover it from the Bijapur government before Bijapur falls into our hands.

'(2) You must join Jai Singh with a well-equipped army and discharge the imperial work to his satisfaction and pay the stipulated ransom after the Bijapur conquest.

'At present a *mansab* of 5,000 horse has been offered to your son. Every horseman will have two or three horses. A dress also has been sent to you. This mandate bears our testimony and our seal.'

Details about the forts, according to Raja Jai Singh's letter. —

|             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Rajgad   | 7. Alwar     |
| 2. Bhorap   | 8. Rayari    |
| 3. Ghosala  | 9. Lingangad |
| 4. Udedurga | 10. Mahadgad |
| 5. Torna    | 11. Pal      |
| 6. Talegad  | 12. Kuwari   |

## APPENDIXES TO CHAPTER IX

### AURANGZIB'S LETTER TO SHIVAJI

August 1665

[After compliments]

'You are at present with your forces in the imperial camp. You reduced the forts of Phaltan and Tathwada which had belonged to the Bijapur government and you led the forces in the night attack in the Konkan, where the enemy had pitched his camp.

'This we learn from Raja Jai Singh's letter and it is the cause of our warm appreciation.

'In recognition of your services a handsome dress and a pretty little jewelled sword are sent you. You will like it, and the more hereafter you exert yourself in this campaign the greater will be our regard for you.'

### AURANGZIB'S LETTER TO SHIVAJI

5 March 1666

[After compliments]

'Your letter sent to us together with Mirza Raja Jai Singh's opinion has been favourably considered by us.

'We have a great regard for you and therefore desire you to come here quickly and without further loss of time.

'When we grant you audience we shall receive you with great hospitality and soon grant you leave to return. A present of a dress has been sent you, which you will accept.'

### AURANGZIB'S LETTER TO SHIVAJI

24 February 1668

[After compliments]

'We hold you in high esteem. On hearing the contents of your letter we have dignified you with the title of Raja. You will receive this distinction and show great capacity for work. Your wishes will then be fulfilled.

'You have spoken to us about your achievements. Everything will be set right. Be free from anxiety and understand that you are in favour.'

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XIII

## ORME'S DESCRIPTION OF SHIVAJI

Orme, in his *Historical Fragments* (p 94), thus sums up Shivaji :

'In personal activity he exceeded all generals of whom there is record. For no partisan, appropriated to service of detachment alone, ever traversed as much ground as he at the head of armies. He met every emergency of peril, however sudden or extreme, with instant discernment and unshaken fortitude, the ablest of his officers acquiesced to the imminent superiority of his genius, and the boast of the soldier was to have seen Shivaji charging sword in hand.'

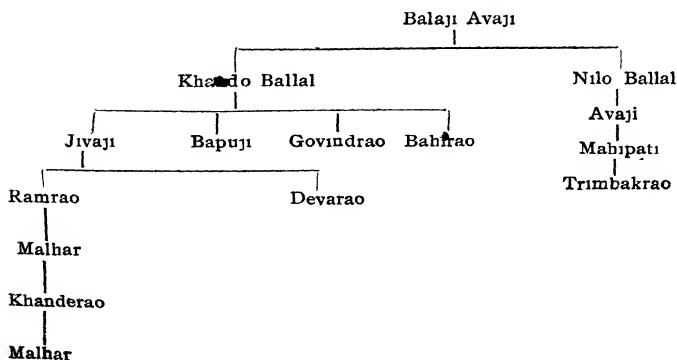
## APPENDIXES TO CHAPTER XIV

## AKBAR'S LETTER TO SAMBHAJI

'Ever since his reign began it has been Aurangzib's design to trample on the Hindus. This was the cause of his quarrel with the Rajputs. All men are God's children and the king is their protector. It is therefore not right for the emperor to destroy them. Aurangzib's wickedness has exceeded all bounds and I am certain that, because of the suffering he has inflicted on his people, the dominion will pass from his hands. Seeing that your country is far from the emperor's camp, I have resolved to come to you. With me is the Rathor Durgadas. Free your mind from all suspicions about me. If by the mercy of the Most High I win the empire, I shall be its master in name only. The empire will really be yours. Together we shall overthrow the emperor. What need to write overmuch to the wise ?'

Sardesai, *Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 504

## GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THE CHITNIS FAMILY



Sardesai, *Riyasat*, Vol. I p. 549

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XVI

## EXTRACT FROM SIKANDAR ADIL SHAH'S LETTER TO ĀURANGZIB

' You should hand over to me according to ancient practice the territory of the Moreed Zadup (son of a spiritual pupil) which formed the *jaghire* of Saja Khan and Mangalvedha and Sangola, etc., which are now in the possession of Nawab Umdat-ul-Mulk. If the imperial forces and those of the nobles and ministers quit my territory, it will remove the misfortunes that follow a military occupation and the people of my villages will be happy. If I be favoured with the money which has been levied from the servants of the exalted court, I shall be able to pay my sepoys and accomplish the object of the expedition against the sinful infidel (Sambhaji) '

This letter was discovered in 1848 by Sir Bartle Frere, then Resident of Satara

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XVIII

## THE DATE OF SAMBHAJI'S CAPTURE

The date of Sambhaji's capture is a controversial question and has been very ably discussed by Pandurang Narsing Patwardhan. Grant Duff has not given the date of Sambhaji's capture, but he has given as the date of his execution the beginning of August 1689. Grant Duff, however, did not arrive at this date by independent inquiry. He followed Orme. In Note lxxviii to his *Historical Fragments of the Moghul Empire*, Orme has given his reasons. A letter written by the Government of Madras to the Company at home, dated 20 July 1689, makes no mention of Sambhaji's death. But the abstract of a letter, dated 27 August contains the following

' Have news from the Moors' camp, their forces had surprised Sambhaji, brought him prisoner to the Moghul. was mounted on a camel, his eyes put out and beheaded, his quarters dispersed as a traitor.'

If twenty days be allowed for the coming of the news, Sambhaji must have been taken at the end of June or the beginning of July. If it be assumed that the Madras Government did not at once write to the Company on receiving the news, Sambhaji was probably executed towards the end of July or the beginning of August. With all respect to that eminent historian, his reasoning, able though it be, is more or less in the nature of surmise. Against it we have the date of Sambhaji's capture given by the *Maisur-i-Alamgiri* as 28 December (see footnote to p. 312, Vol. II, *Storia do Mogor*). This date finds support in the climate of Sangameshwar. The country round Vishalgad would in August be impossible to cavalry. The rainfall in August is extremely heavy and the forest paths are raging torrents. The king, therefore, must have been captured some time in the cold weather. Sarkar (Vol. LV, p. 401) finds that he was captured as late as the end of January 1689. The real date appears to have been 28 December 1688 (see Burgess, p. 132).

The residence of Sambhaji in the house of the Sardesai is established by letter 289 of Vol. XXIX of Rajwade's collection. It is a letter written by one of the Sardesai, the family who owned the village of Sangameshwar and the house where Sambhaji was later. Long after the occurrence a question arose whether the house was their private property or state property, and in this letter Sardesai claimed that the house was his. The letter contains this important passage

' Our mansion at Sangameshwar is an hereditary property. His Highness the late Sambhaji of blessed memory, when harassed by the Moghuls and misled by Kabji (Kalasha) went to Sangameshwar. His Highness passed the summer of *Shake* 1610 near our mansion, then the rainy season passed. Afterwards there was a great disturbance everywhere. Seeing that our mansion was a spacious building His Highness, after consulting us, occupied it. Two and a half months later Shaikh Nim, subedar of the Moghuls, seized him '

## APPENDIXES TO CHAPTER XIX

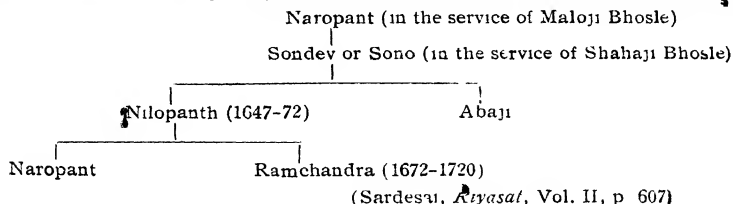
LETTER WRITTEN AT SAMBHAJI'S ORDERS  
TO KRISHNAJI DADA DESHPANDE

'As a *watandar*, it was your duty to be faithful to the master whose salt you had eaten so long, yet you joined the Moghuls when they came here a short time ago. But your brother Shivaji who has also joined the Moghuls is your enemy. Thus you had better have stayed with the king. You would thereby have shown your good faith and loyalty. Still it matters not. Stay with the Moghuls if you still want to do so. Who cares what you do? But remember that whenever we decide to do so, we shall cut you and the Moghuls, your friends, to pieces in no time. If you really should care to join the king, do not send messages to the commandants of our forts. We cannot permit this. If you have any message to send us, send it direct. We shall then consider what you say and issue orders as we think fit. Do not write to other people, address us in person.'

Parasnisi's Papers, quoted in Sardesai's *Riyasat*

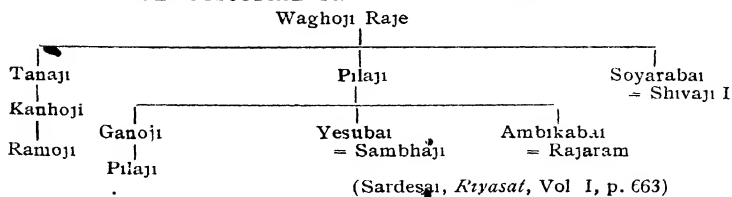
This gives an insight into the frank, impetuous character of Sambhaji

## GENEALOGICAL TREE OF RAMCHANDRA NILKANTH BAVDEKAR'S FAMILY

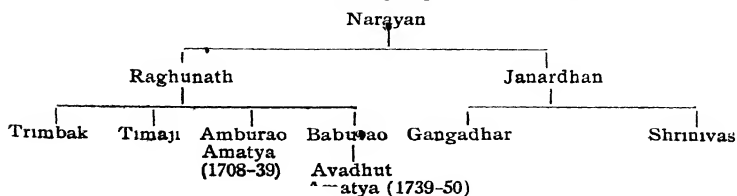


## APPENDIXES TO CHAPTER XXI

## GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THE SHIRKES



## GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THE HANMANTES



(Ib. p. 651)

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXIV

## A SPECIMEN OF THE LETTERS SENT BY SHAHU TO MARATHA OFFICERS AND NOBLES AS HE ADVANCED

From Maharaja Shahu

To Malaji Jedhe, *deshmukh* of Rohidkhora

'We, the maharaja, are pleased to order you as follows We are at present at Chorwad, District Utran in Khandesh We are advancing by rapid marches. You have long served the crown Come therefore now and serve us As we advance join us with your followers. When we meet, we shall consider how best we can reward you. Fail not to act as we bid you.'

Sardesai, *Riyasat*, Vol. I

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXVI

## GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THE PINGLES



## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXIX

## THE TREATY OF WARNA GRANTED BY SHAHU TO SAMBHAJI

- Clause 1** The province known as the Waruna Mahal is given to you with all its forts and strong places
- Clause 2** Half of all the states from the Tungabhadra southwards to Rameshwaram is given to you and half is kept for ourselves.
- Clause 3** In exchange for Kopal you have given us Ratnagiri.
- Clause 4** The fort of Vadgaon must be destroyed.
- Clause 5** All your enemies shall be our enemies. Our enemies shall be your enemies. We shall both work in union for the welfare of the kingdom.
- Clause 6** From the junction of the Warna and Kistna rivers as far as the junction of the Tungabhadra and the Kistna the southern bank with all its forts and strong places is yours.
- Clause 7** The Konkan from Salsi as far as Ankola is yours.
- Clause 8** You shall employ and pay no one in our territories. We shall employ and pay no one in your territories.
- Clause 9** You must surrender the fort and district of Miraj and the forts and districts of Bijapur, Athani and Tasgaon.

*History of Ichalkaranji State*, p. 39.

## APPENDIXES TO CHAPTER XXXI

## THE MARATHAS IN BANDELKHAND

- 'By the terms of Chatrasal's will his eldest son Hirdesa received territory yielding a revenue of 42 lakhs. Within his portion were Panna, Kakajjar, Mhow, Irich and Dhamoni. Chatrasal's second son Jagatraj received country yielding 36 lakhs. Within his borders fell Jetpur, Ajayagad, Charkari Banda and Bijawar.'

To the Peshwa were bequeathed lands that yielded 33 lakhs. Within his borders fell Kalpi, Sagar, Jhansi, Sironj and Hardenagar.

The will contained the following three clauses

- 1 With the exception of expeditions beyond the Jumna or the Chambal, both brothers (i.e. Hirdesa and Jagatraj) should join Bajirao Sahib in every campaign and should share in the plunder and conquered lands in proportion to the troops provided by them.
- 2 If Bajirao should be involved in Deccan warfare, the two brothers should defend for at least two months the frontiers of Bundelkhand
- 3 King Chatrasal has looked on Bajirao Sahib as his son. Bajirao Sahib must therefore guard his (Chatrasal's) sons, as if they were his blood brothers

Bajirao put in charge of his Bundelkhand estate Govind Ballal Kher, a Karhad Brahmin. He was the son of Narsipantbaba Kher, the *kulkarni* of Burmad in Ratnagiri. He was adopted into the family of Balaji Govind Kher, the *kulkarni* of the neighbouring village of Nevaren. On his adoptive father's death, he was robbed by his adopted relations and forced to take refuge with his natural family. Afterwards he obtained the office of *shagird*, or personal attendant, in the Peshwa Bajirao's service. Once when Bajirao was unable to obtain firewood, Govindpant Kher took some from the funeral pyre of a corpse and served his master an excellent dinner. Struck with his servant's resource, the Peshwa promoted him to a military command. In it he did so well that his further advancement was assured.

In 1733 Bajirao appointed him as his agent and afterwards as governor of his possessions. He assumed the name of Govindpant Bandela. As we shall see hereafter, Govindpant fell on the field of honour, shortly before Panipat.

An admirable account of the Marathas in Bundelkhand will be found in Parasnis' *Monthyanche Parakram*, p. 81.

TRANSLATION OF A LETTER SENT BY BAJIRAO TO HIS BROTHER  
CHIMAJI APPA, SENT FROM JAYPUR BEARING THE DATE OF  
5 APRIL, 1737

CAMP SAWAI JAYANAGAR  
8th of the dark half of  
*Vaishakh* moon, 15 *Jyeshth* <sup>1</sup>

To Appa

[After compliments]

'You must have already learnt from our letters sent with *kasis* (special couriers in which I have given in detail the news of our having left in Bundelkhand all our followers in charge of Prince Jagatraj and of the action with Sadat Khan. Sadat Khan crossed the Jumna and arrived at Agra. If we were to meet him there we were not sure of defeating him owing to his advantageous position there. If we were to wait at the confluence of the Jumna and the Gambhu, that place was also unsafe owing to landships and erosions. Besides, Khan Dauran and Mahomed Khan Bangash were on their way to Agra from Delhi, and in case they and Sadat Khan happened to join, it would have been a serious affair. So it was not thought proper to encamp at the confluence. Further, Sadat Khan wrote to the emperor and his courtiers that he had routed the Maratha army that had crossed the Jumna, killing two thousand cavalry and drowning two thousand in the river, that Malharji Holkar and Vithoba Rule had fallen in the action. Such had been the result of Bajirao's invasion! He further vauntingly wrote that he would cross the Jumna and defeat the Marathas and drive them away beyond the Chambal. The emperor expressed great satisfaction at this and sent to Sadat Khan a dress of honour, a pearl necklace, an elephant and an aigrette. Clothes of honour were also presented to Sadat Khan's agent at the Delhi court. Thus Sadat Khan strengthened his and his party's influence with

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Jaipur, 5 April 1737



the emperor. He also wrote to several nobles in contemptuous terms about the Marathas. Dhondo Govind (Peshwa's agent at Delhi) kept us informed of all these particulars from time to time. In short, Sadat Khan tried to impress the Moghul court that the Maratha army had neither spirit nor energy and that he had completely defeated it. You are already aware how things pass in Moghul politics. No action and high talk is their motto. The emperor fully believes all this, but he must now be disillusioned. This could be done in two ways—either by inflicting a crushing defeat on Sadat Khan or by marching on Delhi and setting fire to the capital, and thus disproving Sadat Khan's boastful statements. We accordingly decided to march against Delhi as Sadat Khan would not leave Agra, and setting fire to the capital bring to the notice of the emperor the existence of the Marathas. With this determination we started for Delhi on the 26 *Jilhad* (18 March, 1737). Leaving aside the imperial route we followed the hilly tract along the Newati frontier through the territory of Damjan Singh, Chudaman Jat. Dhondopant, our *vakil*, was with Khan Dauran. Sadat Khan sent a word to Khan Dauran. "I have defeated Bajirao's army. His followers have fled away and Bajirao himself has crossed the Chambal. Now why do you flatter him and with what object? Why should you entertain his *ikil* at your court? He must be now dismissed." Dhondopant was accordingly sent away. He then came to us. Kamruddin Khan, Azmulla Khan and others encountered us, but we did not meet them. Leaving them 14 miles off to our right, we arrived at Delhi on 7 *Jilhey* (28 March), after forced marches of 40 miles each. We pitched our camp near Kushbandi (a suburb of Delhi) leaving Barapula and Kalika temple to our right. We wanted to burn the capital to ashes, but on second thought we saw no good in destroying the mighty city and ruining the imperial throne at Delhi. Moreover the emperor and Khan Dauran desired to make peace with us, but the Moghuls would not agree to it. An act of outrage, however, breaks the thread of politics. We, therefore, gave up the idea of burning the capital and sent letters to the emperor and Raja Bakhatmal. Two elephants, some horses and camels coming out from the city were however captured by our advance guard. Some of our soldiers had a scuffle with the people from Delhi who had gone out to attend the Bhawani fair. Next day, Wednesday, 30 March, Raja Bakhatmal sent a reply under commands of the emperor, asking us to send Dhondopant to the imperial court. We did not, however, dispatch him as there was a great commotion in Delhi owing to our presence near the capital, but we sent word in reply. "We are sending Dhondopant, please send a strong guard under a reliable officer to escort him. We are marching on to the Zil Tank as our presence near the city is likely to disturb its peace." And we moved on. As we were passing the capital a force consisting of 7 to 8 thousand men was sent by the emperor under Nawab Mir Hasan Khan Koka, commander of the Khas Chowki, Nawab Amir Khan, Khoja Roz Afzul Khan, Raja Shivsingh Jamadar, Commander of the Cavalry, Muzfur Khan, Deputy-General, Nawab Muzfur Khan, brother of Khan Dauran, who met us near Rikabganj outside the city. Salwaji Jadhav who commanded the advance guard, met the Moghul forces and a fight took place between them. On hearing this, we sent forces to help him under Malharji Holkar, Ranoji Shinde, Tukoji Pawar, Jiwaji Pawar, Yeshwantrao Pawar, Manaji Payagude and Govind Hari. They gallantly fought with the Moghuls and completely defeated them. Raja Shivsingh and ten other noblemen were killed; Nawab Mir Hasan Koka was wounded and about three hundred soldiers from the emperor's army were killed and four hundred wounded. Roz Afzul Khan, Amir Khan, Muzfur Khan fled to the capital. We captured two thousand horses, though five or six thousand fled away. Indroji Kadam from Ranoji Shinde's cavalry received a bullet-wound by which two of his fingers were cut off. No other person of note on our side was killed, but some men and horses were wounded. We then encamped at the Zil Tank. About two hours before sunset news came that Kamruddin Khan had arrived from Fardashapur. We at once started to meet him. A fight took place. Yeshwantrao Pawar captured an elephant that was within a gun-shot from the Moghul artillery. A number of horses and camels came to our camp when it was sunset. We wanted to besiege the Moghul army from all sides and give them a crushing defeat next day. But we could not do so as there were several difficulties in our way, the Zil Tank was about 32 miles off from us, Kamruddin Khan was to our right and in our

front was the capital. Besides this, the news of our march on Delhi reached Nawab Khan Dauran, Sadat Khan, and Mahomed Khan Bangash on Tuesday, 7 Jilhej (28 March), at Radhakund. They left behind their heavy baggage and immediately proceeded to Badel, about 64 miles distant, with an army about twenty-five to thirty thousand strong. Next day they halted on the rivulet of Alawardi about 50 miles off. On Thursday morning Khan Dauran, Sadat Khan and Bangash were to join Kamruddin Khan. The situation then would have been perilous, as the capital was near. We, therefore, left the Moghuls and halted at a distance of 8 miles. On our side Prangon Patankar was killed by a bullet. A few men and some horses were also wounded. The Moghul casualties amounted to from 5 to 10. On Thursday Sadat Khan, Khan Dauran, and Bangash joined Kamruddin Khan. Their camps were spread from Alawardi to the Zil Tank. We designed to draw the Moghuls on us and then to fall back and defeat them. With this object, we broke the camp and moved on via Revad, Kotputali, and Manoharpur. The news has come that the Moghuls have not as yet left their camps between Alawardi and Zil Tank, and that Mir Hasan Khan Koka who was wounded in the first action has died. Khan Dauran wrote letter after letter to Sawai Jaisingh to send reinforcement. He has accordingly started with a force of fifteen to sixteen thousand men and artillery and has arrived at Basava. He intends visiting Khan Dauran. Sawaji has also sent us friendly letters, requesting us to leave his territory undisturbed. Our agent, Venkaji Ram, is in his camp. He writes these letters to us. We do not disturb his territory, as we expect to get supplies of grain and fodder from Sawaji on our way. Abhayasingh is at Jodhpur. Now we are going to collect our dues from the Gwalior and Bhadavar provinces. If the Moghuls still pursue us, we shall harass them and reduce them by driving them by force from place to place and utterly crush them by the grace of our king (Raja Shahu) and the blessings of our ancestors. Be not anxious on our account. The chief thing to be noted is that the emperor and Khan Dauran wish to make peace with us while the Moghuls are striving to defeat us, and Sadat Khan is at their head. If by the favour of God his vanity is subdued, everything will be to our satisfaction. If the terms of peace are favourable we shall accept them. Otherwise we shall not conclude any peace. We have annexed the territory about Delhi. The territory about Sonpat and Panpat beyond the Jumna still remains with the Moghuls. We shall plunder and capture it soon and see that the Moghuls will be starved. We shall write to you later on what happens here. If perchance the Moghuls remain in possession of Delhi, we shall go to Agra and enter into Antarved (districts between the Ganges and Jumna) and ravage the whole territory. If Nizam-ul-Mulk rises and crosses the Narbada, fall upon his rear and harass him as previously advised. On this side none is to be afraid of. Let there be none whom we need fear. It will be better if the Nizam is held in check. I close this with my blessings to you. Continue to love me as ever.'

Parasnis, *Brahmendraswami Yanche Charitra*

(Grant Duff must have seen this letter. He has paraphrased part of it when he writes, 'I was resolved', said Bajirao, 'to tell the emperor the truth to prove that I was still in Hindustan and to show him flames and Marathas at the gates of his capital.')

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXXII

27 *Mohurram* 1152

### LETTER OF NADIRSHAH TO BAJIRAO PESHWA

'I begin with the name of God who is gracious and merciful.

I begin with  
the name of God.  
A precious stone  
of two religions had gone  
By the help of God he made him-  
self known by the name of  
Nadir, Iran.

Bajirao possessing a charming face and being a man of good luck, a devotee towards Moslem faith, being a candidate for the royal favour, is informed that this time, with the help of the Almighty, Delhi is the capital and military place, and is the rising star of the great kingdom as the great nawab is of the Turks. To Emperor Muhammad Shah whose greatness is like that of the heavens, who is the fulfiller of all hopes, who is highly respected and noble, whose noble birth is from a Turkish mother, and whose forefathers were of the Gurjanis tribe, the kingdom and crown of India is entrusted, treating him as brother of the same religious profession and as a son, and as you, having a sweet face, and being a leader of the brave tribe, who maintains himself always by the wealth of the state. It is necessary for you to serve the emperor honestly and well, keeping in mind his rights. But up to now it is not reported that you are serving just as you ought, but done is done. As at the present juncture on account of the disaffection, (perfect, noble and hearty friendship between our states having taken place) we understand that Muhammad Shah's state given by God is connected with ours for putting down the rebels and the invaders of the said state of the Gurjanis, a brave and courageous person must be appointed. When, therefore, you are informed of the contents of our noble command that Raja Shahu of great nobility, of good visage, well experienced and obedient to the Musalman religion, has been appointed to that post, then you will send news of your good health and safety, remembering always that you are to be obedient to the royal order, which order will be received by Shahu for the performance of the services heartily and without neglect and fail, and he (Shahu) will try his best to act accordingly. By the help of God, every one far or near, if he be obedient to the state will be regarded as worthy of service and deserving of rewards and gifts, but whoever tries to rebel against the state, a victorious friend of religion is ready for war to defeat such an enemy and to suppress him, and such a large army will be sent, that by going to the boundaries of the place of rebellion, necessary punishment will be inflicted upon the rebels. In these matters you must take good warning and act according to your position.

## APPENDIXES TO CHAPTER XXXVII

### RULES DRAWN UP FOR THE GUIDANCE OF THE RANIS BY THE PESHWA AT SHAHU'S REQUEST

- 1 Neither rani should quarrel with the other
- 2 The rani should grant to each rani similar cash allowances and lands
- 3 All *jaghires* in the occupation of the ranis without *sanads* should be surrendered
- 4 The rani should not requisition supplies of money from towns of districts alienated to *zildars* (cavalry soldiers) or *mokasdars*.
- 5 The rani should not seize lands in other persons' *saranjams* or *jaghires*
- 6 The rani should not confiscate *deshmukhships* (village offices) or *watans* (hereditary village grants of land).
- 7 Whoever gives one rani a present of land should make a similar present to the other
- 8 The rani should not take sides in disputes arising in the capital.
- 9 The rani should not hear suits brought by creditors against their debtors.
- 10 The rani should not levy taxes or tolls.

Both the *ranis* have accepted these terms. This should continue for ever.

From the *Parasnis Collection*

## SHAHU'S TWO LETTERS TO THE PESHWA

To Balaji Pradhan Pandit\*

'It is hereby ordered that you shall command the whole forces. I gave orders to everyone else to do this, but no one was destined to hold the post. We are ill and are afraid that we shall not recover. The government of the empire must be carried on. Some one of our relatives must continue the dynasty. But bring no one from Kolhapur. We have told everything to Chitnis. He will tell you our wishes. Act accordingly. Be loyal and obedient to the descendants of our house and maintain the court and the nobles. The Chitnis is our faithful servant. In consultation with him preserve our kingdom. Our descendants will not interfere with your office. Be prudent and wise.'

To Balaji Pandit Pradhan

'We hereby state that we hope and believe that you will ably conduct the administration of this kingdom. The Chitnis, as I have already told you, is of proven loyalty. Our blessings rest on you! Our successors will continue you in office. Should our successor act otherwise, we hereby bind him with a solemn oath and command him not to do so. Be obedient and loyal to him and protect our kingdom. Nothing more need be said. Be prudent and wise.

From the *Parasnis Collection*

## LETTER FROM MAHADJI PURANDARE

To Nana (Balaji) Bhao (Sadashivrao) Pesawa

[After compliments about His Highness' health]

'In the afternoon His Highness feels feverish and exhausted. His stomach is all covered with the juice of the marking nut (an application to relieve pain). Though His Highness' health is so poor, the two ranis are daily quarrelling. This so pains His Highness that he exclaims, "It would be far better, if God would end my life!" His Highness neglects his health. He listens to no one. Govindrao and Yeshwantrao spoke about it to His Highness, but he did not answer. From time to time he says, "What purpose does my life serve?"

'Last Wednesday Nagoji Rao Keshavrao was at the court. Raghoram's men put to death a certain debtor. His Highness heard the case and then he observed, "If my servants and guards had been involved and had put Appaji Raghunath to death, what could I have done?" It is useless to count on my support or my power. The two ranis are now supreme. I have no power to stop them from doing anything they want to. They have caused a quarrel between the *kasars* (bangle-sellers) and the *parals* (a caste). The grocers have all gone on strike and we cannot dissuade them. When the grocers leave the towns perhaps the ranis will give way. If we cannot get any grocery, the maids must cook us a dinner, but we do not want to get mixed up in the quarrels of the two shrews. We wanted to see Gajrabai living happily with her husband. But the elder rani threatens her son-in-law. From this her behaviour towards others may be judged. We have become powerless." These were His Highness' words. In short His Highness is powerless against his ranis. Such is the state of things here. For the last three or four days the money-lenders have been visiting the palace. "We are bankrupt," they shout, "we want our money." His Highness fears that if they sit *dharna*<sup>1</sup> he will be at his wits' end. Both the ranis keep talking about the king's debts and the money lenders. Bad times are coming. We must wait and see how the ranis' quarrels will end.'

From the *Parasnis Collection*

(This letter throws much light on the state of the court at the close of Shahu's reign.)

<sup>1</sup> To sit *dharna* is to starve oneself until one's debt is paid.

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXXVIII

LETTER FROM BALAJI PESHWA TO NANA SAHIB PURANDARE  
GIVING AN ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF SATARA

To Rajeshri Nana,

With love and blessings from Balaji Bajirao

'Your letter of 28 *Rabīlakhar*, sent with a messenger on camel,\* duly came to our hands on 12 *Jamādīlavel*. We came to know in detail the account of your fight with the Gaikvad in which he was routed and made to retreat to Gendya Mal, and the capture of three-fourths of his irregulars together with camels, horses and palankeens. The contents of the letter greatly pleased us. The messenger told us that the Gaikvad's camp was on the bank of the Yenna. Your camp is near the bank of the Kistna. Messrs. Manaji Paygude and Tatyā also must have joined you in your camp. With your united efforts, do not allow the Gaikvad to escape.

If the situation favours you, crush and defeat the Gaikvad's army and plunder him. Do not demobilize your forces till the Gaikvad is defeated and routed. We came to an amicable settlement with the Moghuls. All our business in this part is finished. With regular marches, we have been able to encamp ourselves at Nizamkonda on 12 *Jamādīlavel*. We shall expedite our march and come there soon. Do not allow the Gaikvad to escape. It is no surprise to us, that while the battle was being fought, Sonji Bhaskar and men in the service of the Huzurat and Raja Huzurat showed wonderful bravery; that Bapuji Baba was wounded with a sword, that Nagoram was wounded with shot, etc. It was in the fitness of things that these worthy soldiers rose to the occasion. For further conduct of the war, we fully rely on them. You should try to cheer everyone up. You won the victory in a battle which had been almost lost. You acquitted yourself in a way that would have befitted your ancestors. Your further manoeuvres to paralyse the foe should be regulated with great vigilance and caution. Exert yourselves to the utmost. We shall be coming soon.'

From the *Parasnis Collection*

(This gives an account of the Battle of Satara)

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XL

## LETTER FROM BRAHMENDRASWAMI TO TULAJI ANGRE

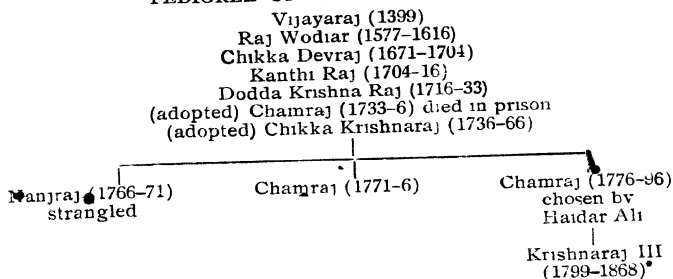
[After compliments]

'You have committed a thousand crimes. I should never have addressed a line to you, but I am writing this letter in the hope that you may be reconciled to Manaji, for, if you are, I shall have done a great thing. Send back to Manaji the ladies of his household. I have spoken to Manaji too, and I am sure that he will behave well, for I have examined his inmost heart. You are brothers and you should be friends and join in some great work, and this we urge you to do.'

From the *Parasnis Collection*

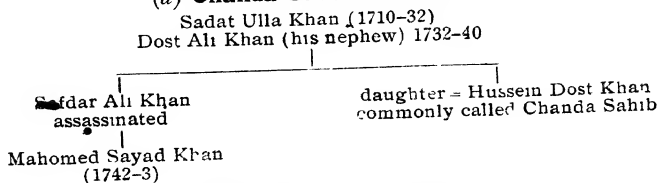
## APPENDIXES TO CHAPTER XLI

## PEDIGREE OF THE MYSORE RULERS

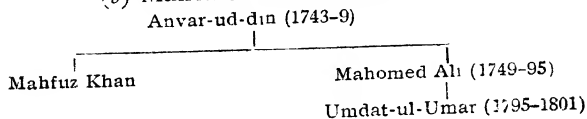


## FAMILY TREES OF THE NAWABS OF ARCOI

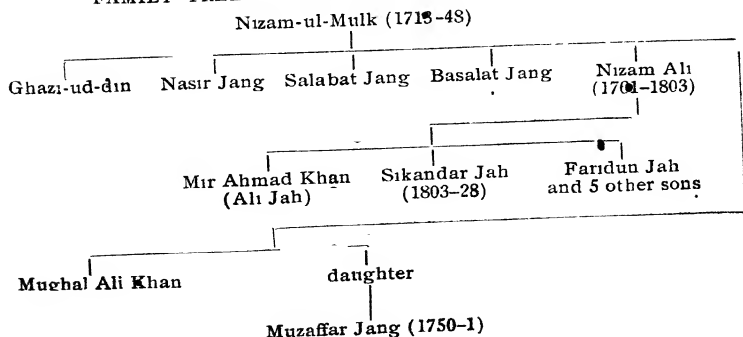
## (a) Chanda Sahib's branch



## (b) Mahomed Ali's branch



## FAMILY TREE OF THE NIZAMS OF HYDERABAD

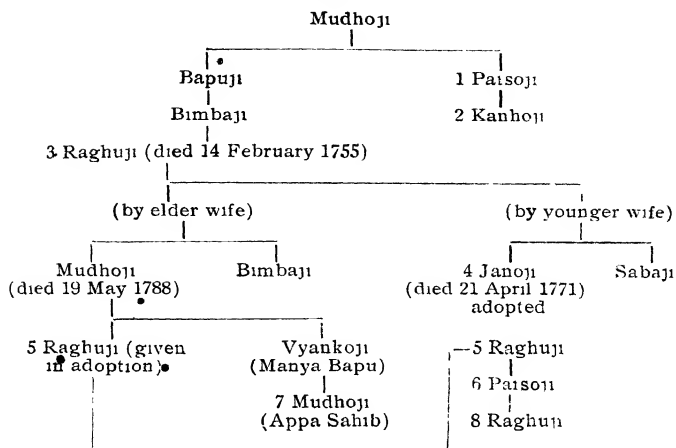


## SYNOPSIS OF EVENTS ALREADY RELATED, 1750-60

The synopsis does not include events in the succeeding chapters :-

- 1751 January, Balaji attacks the Nizam but makes peace on hearing of Damaji Gaikwad's rebellion  
 March and April. Damaji Gaikwad's rebellion.  
 September Clive takes Arcot  
 November and December. Balaji renews the war against the Nizam  
 Battles of Kukadi and Ghodnadi. Marathas take Trimbak
- 1752 January Truce of Shingwa with the Nizam.  
 March Agreement between the Peshwa and Damaji Gaikwad  
 June Surrender and execution of Chanda Sahib  
 September Tarabai and Balaji take mutual oaths of friendship at Jejuri  
 October. Murder of Ghazi ud-din.  
 November Treaty of Bhalki with the Nizam.  
 December Raghunathrao invades Gujarat and besieges Jawan Mard Khan Babi in Ahmedabad.
- 1753 March Capture of Ahmedabad by the Marathas  
 October to December. Sayad Lashkar Khan's plot against de Bussy.
- 1754 October Dupleix leaves India  
 December. Treaty between Godeheu and the English  
 December to June 1755. Balaji's first Carnatic expedition.
- 1755 April. Capture of Suvarnadurg in alliance with the English  
 October to May 1756 Balaji's second Carnatic expedition and siege of Savanur.
- 1756 April. Capture of Vijayadurg  
 June. The nawab of Bengal storms Calcutta  
 July De Bussy dismissed by the Nizam.  
 The Moghuls and the nawab of Cambay retake Ahmedabad.  
 August. Return of de Bussy to the service of the Nizam.
- 1757 January 2 Clive retakes Calcutta.  
 January to June. Balaji's third Carnatic expedition, Shri-Rang temple injured  
 March Fall of Chandernagore  
 May. Conspiracy of Shah Nawaz Khan and Nizam Ali against Salabat Jang  
 June Carnatic campaign under Balwantrao Mehendale. It lasted until February 1758  
 June 23rd Battle of Plassey  
 August. Battle of Sindkhed De Bussy foils the conspirators. Death of Shah Nawaz Khan  
 September Victory of Balwantrao Mehendale at Kadapa and death of the nawab  
 October. Recapture of Ahmedabad by the Marathas.
- 1758 July. Recall of de Bussy from Hyderabad. Spread of Nizam Ali's rebellion.
- 1759 January to June 1760 Carnatic campaign under Gopalrao Govind Patwardhan.
- 1760 January. Battle of Udgir.

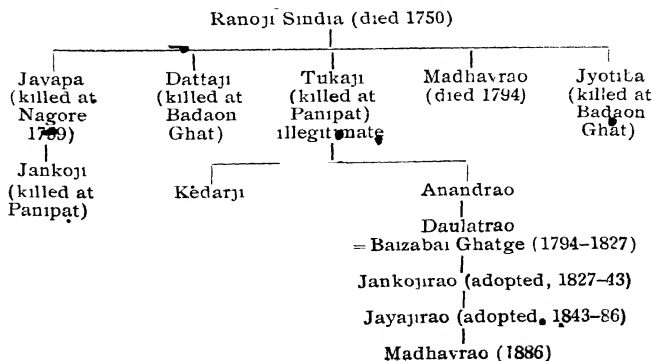
## GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THE NAGPUR BHOSLES



(Janoji was born before his brothers, but his mother was the younger wife. The numbers mark the members of the family who succeeded in that order to the Bhosle estate.)

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XLII

## PEDIGREE OF THE SINDIA FAMILY





## APPENDIXES TO CHAPTER XLIII

LETTER TO RAGHUNATHRAO, PESHWA COMPLAINING THAT  
THE PESHWA HAD CENSURED HIM

To Shrimant Dadhasaheb

From Vithal Shivdev Vinchurkar, Camp Gangruni, District Malwa.

[After compliments]

'Letters from you are received by Subhedar Malharrao Holkar. We two are living together in the same camp, which you must have learnt from other sources. The reason that the Peshwa does not write to us seems to be his displeasure that we did not die on the battlefield. It is true that nobody can escape death. But one cannot help escaping it during the fated period of one's life. It was only the mercy of Providence that we recovered when severely wounded. How true it is that "Life means duty and that life provides for food." Nevertheless we are smarting under a bitter sense of mortification. It is not that we have forgotten what happened. But the truth is, that all our efforts in the battlefield, good or bad, proved in vain, through the wrath of the Almighty.'

From the *Parasnis Collection*

LETTER FROM HOLKAR'S DIWAN COMPLAINING OF THE  
ATTACHMENT OF THE HOLKAR ESTATES

To Shrimant Dadasaheb (Raghunathrao Peshwa)

From Vinayakrao and Krishnarao Gangadhar

'Your Lordship's dispatch of the 11th to Tatya was received at Gangruni on the 9th and its contents greatly delighted us. We note with pleasure your lordship's several directions about the affairs in Hindustan. The *Subhedar* (Malharrao Holkar) has sent Gangadhar Yeshwant to Vizier Ghazi-ud-din Khan and Thakur Surajmal with a view to restoring peace and order in Hindustan. Your lordship's observation that the *Subhedar* is the backbone of our policy in northern India, is quite true. In days gone by, the late Peshwa Bajirao entrusted his interests to Malharrao Holkar. But this year, since the return of Shrimant (the Peshwa) from Sironje, it appears that the *Subhedar* no longer enjoys his confidence. There has been no neglect of duty on the part of Malharrao Holkar. The fugitives that took part in the battle of Panipat must have seen your lordship and related the true account. What is the use of praising a defeat? It is well known how Sindia and Powar, the old servants of the *sarkar*, fared in the battle! The news communicated by your lordship about the confiscation of the *Subhedar's mahals* in the Deccan has brought on him a feeling of despair. He often complains that, if this be the fruit of his past services, what of the future.'

From the *Parasnis Collection*

## APPENDIXES TO CHAPTER LI

Extract from a letter from Nana Phadnis to Madhavrao Sindia

'We were never ambitious to conquer the Company's lands. We never did them any harm. It was they who declared war against us and caused us heavy losses for six whole years. They have attempted to weaken the framework of our empire by trying to win over the Gaikwad and Bhosle, two pillars of our state. If we let them act as they wish, we shall only bring calamity on ourselves and subvert our empire. We shall neither give nor ask for favours, but make a treaty of peace with the greatest caution and care. We must not only insist on the reparation of our wrongs, but we must try to recover that part of the Carnatic

conquests of the great Shivaji which is now occupied by the English. We shall certainly achieve our aims at Delhi without sacrificing our interests to the English. They can never establish their supremacy at Delhi, if the Marathas act vigorously and in union.'

[This shows with what feelings he regarded the English ]

#### TREATY OF SALBAI

#### TREATY OF PEACE WITH THE MARATHAS (1782)

'Treaty of perpetual friendship and alliance between the Hon'ble the English East India Company and the Peshwa Madhavrav Pandit Pradhan, settled by Mr David Anderson, on the part of the Hon'ble Company, in virtue of the powers delegated to him for that purpose by the Hon'ble the Governor-General and Council, appointed by the King and Parliament of Great Britain to direct and control all political affairs of the Hon'ble English East India Company in India; and by Maharaja Soubahdar Madhavrav Sindia, as plenipotentiary, on the part of the Peshwa Madhavrav Pandit Pradhan, Ballaji Pandit, Nana Phadanavis, and the whole of the Chiefs of the Maratha nation, agreeably to the following articles, which shall be ever binding on their heirs and successors, and the conditions of them to be invariably observed by both parties.

#### ARTICLE I

'It is stipulated and agreed to between the Hon'ble the English East India Company and the Peshwa, through the mediation of Madhaviav Sindia, that all countries, places, cities, and forts, including Bassein, etc., which have been taken from the Peshwa during the war that has arisen since the treaty settled by Colonel Upton, and have come into the possession of the English, shall be delivered up to the Peshwa, the territories, ports, cities, etc. to be restored, shall be delivered within the space of two months from the period when this treaty shall become complete (as hereinafter described), to such persons as the Peshwa, or his minister Nana Phadanavis shall appoint

#### ARTICLE II

'It is agreed between the English Company and the Peshwa, that Salsette and three other islands, viz Elephanta, Karanja and Hog, which are included in the treaty of Colonel Upton, shall continue for ever in possession of the English. If any other islands have been taken in the course of the present war, they shall be delivered up to the Peshwa.

#### ARTICLE III

'Whereas it was stipulated in the fourth article of the treaty of Colonel Upton, "that the Peshwa and all the Chiefs of the Maratha state do agree to give the English Company, for ever, all right and title to the city of Broach, as full and complete as ever they collected from the Moghuls or otherwise, without retaining any claim of *chauth*, or any other claims whatsoever, so that the English Company shall possess it without participation or claim of any kind", this article is accordingly continued in full force and effect

#### ARTICLE IV

'The Peshwa having formerly, in the treaty of Colonel Upton, agreed by way of friendship to give up to the English a country of three lakhs of rupees, near Broach, the English do now, at the request of Madhavrav Sindia, consent to relinquish their claim to the said country in favour of the Peshwa.

#### ARTICLE V

'The country which Sayaji and Fattasing Gaikawar gave to the English, and which is mentioned in the seventh article of the treaty of Colonel Upton, being therein left in a state of suspense, the English, with a view to obviate all future

disputes, now agree that it shall be restored, and it is hereby settled that, if the said country be a part of the established territory of the Gaikawar, it shall be restored to the Gaikawar, and if it shall be a part of the Peshwa's territories it shall be restored to the Peshwa.

#### ARTICLE VI

'The English engage that, having allowed Raghunathrav a period of four months from the time when this treaty shall become complete to fix on a place of residence; they will not, after the expiration of the said period, afford him any support, protection, or assistance, nor supply him with money for his expenses, and the Peshwa on his part engages, that if Raghunathrav will voluntarily and of his own accord repair to Maharaja Madhavrav Sindia, and quietly reside with him, the sum of Rs 25,000 per month shall be paid him for his maintenance, and no injury whatever shall be offered to him by the Peshwa, or any of his people.

#### ARTICLE VII

'The Hon'ble the English East India Company and the Peshwa being desirous that their respective allies shall be included in this peace, it is hereby mutually stipulated that each party shall make peace with the allies of the other, in the manner hereinafter specified.

#### ARTICLE VIII

'The territory which has long been the established *jaghure* of Sayaji Gaikawar and Fattessing Gaikawar, that is to say, whatever territory Fattessing Gaikawar possessed at the commencement of the present war, shall hereafter for ever remain on the usual footing in his possession, and the said Fattessing shall, from the date of this treaty being complete, pay for the future to the Peshwa the tribute as usual previous to the present war, and shall perform such services and be subject to such obedience, as have long been established and customary. No claim shall be made on the said Fattessing by the Peshwa for the period that is past.

#### ARTICLE IX

'The Peshwa engages, that whereas the Nawab Hyder Ali Khan, having concluded a treaty with him, hath disturbed and taken possession of territories belonging to the English and their allies, he shall be made to relinquish them, and they shall be restored to the Company and the Nawab Mahomed Ali Khan. All prisoners that have been taken on either side during the war shall be released, and Hyder Ali Khan shall be made to relinquish all such territories belonging to the English Company and their allies, as he may have taken possession of, since the ninth of *Ramzan* in the year 1181, being the date of his treaty with the Peshwa, and the said territories shall be delivered over to the English and the Nawab Mahomed Ali Khan within six months after this treaty being complete, and the English, in such case, agree that, so long as Hyder Ali Khan shall afterwards abstain from hostilities against them and their allies, and so long as he shall continue in friendship with the Peshwa, they will in no respect act hostilely towards him.

#### ARTICLE X

'The Peshwa engages, on his own behalf as well as on behalf of his allies, the Nawab Nizam Ali Khan, Raghoji Bhosle, Syna Saheb Soubah and the Nawab Hyder Ali Khan, that they shall, in every respect, maintain peace towards the English and their allies, the Nawab Asoph-ul-Dowlah Bahadur, and the Nawab Mahomed Ali Khan Bahadur, and shall in no respect whatever give them any disturbance. The English engage on their own behalf, as well as on behalf of their allies, the Nawab Asoph-ul-Dowlah, and the Nawab Mahomed Ali Khan, that they shall in every respect maintain peace towards the Peshwa and his allies, the Nawab Nizam Ali Khan and Raghoji Bhosle, Syna Saheb, and the English further engage on their own behalf, as well as on behalf of their allies, that they will maintain peace also towards the Nawab Hyder Ali Khan under the conditions specified in Article IX of this treaty.

## ARTICLE XI

'The Hon'ble the East India Company and the Peshwa mutually agree that the vessels of each shall afford no disturbance to the navigation of the vessels of the other, and the vessels of each shall be allowed access to the ports of the other, where they shall meet with no molestation, and the fullest protection shall be reciprocally afforded.

## ARTICLE XII

'The Peshwa and the Chiefs of the Maratha state hereby agree that the English shall enjoy the privilege of trade, as formerly, in the Maratha territories, and shall meet with no kind of interruption; and, in the same manner, the Hon'ble the East India Company agree that the subjects of the Peshwa shall be allowed the privilege of trade, without interruption, in the territories of the English.

## ARTICLE XIII

'The Peshwa hereby engages that he will not suffer any factories of other European nations to be established in his territories, or those of the chiefs dependant on him, excepting only such as are already established by the Portuguese, and he will hold no intercourse of friendship with any other European nations, and the English on their part agree that they will not afford assistance to any nation of Deccan or Hindustan in enmity with the Peshwa.

## ARTICLE XIV

'The English and the Peshwa mutually agree that neither will afford any kind of assistance to the enemies of the other.

## ARTICLE XV

'The Hon'ble the Governor-General and Council of Fort William engage that they will not permit any of the chiefs, dependants or subjects of the English, the gentlemen of Bombay, Surat or Madras, to act contrary at any place to the terms of this treaty. In the same manner, the Peshwa Madhavrav Pandit Pradhan engages that none of the Chiefs or subjects of the Maratha state shall act contrary to them.

## ARTICLE XVI

'The Hon'ble the East India Company and the Peshwa Madhavrav Pandit Pradhan having the fullest confidence in Maharaja Soubahdar Madhavrav Sindia Bahadur, they have both requested the said maharaja to be the mutual guarantee for the perpetual and invariable adherence to both parties to the conditions of this treaty, and the said Madhavrav Sindia, from a regard to the welfare of both states hath accordingly taken upon himself the mutual guarantee. If either of the parties shall deviate from the conditions of this treaty, the said maharaja will join the other party and will, to the utmost of his power, endeavour to bring the aggressor to a proper understanding.

## ARTICLE XVII

'It is hereby agreed that whatever territories, forts or cities in Gujarat were granted by Raghunathrav to the English previous to the treaty of Colonel Upton, and have come into their possession, the restitution of which was stipulated in the seventh article to the said treaty, shall be restored, agreeably to the terms of the said article.

'This treaty consisting of 17 articles is settled at Salbai, in the camp of Maharaja Soubahdar Madhavrav Sindia, on the 4th of the month of Jammadul Saany. in the year 1197 of the *Hygera*, corresponding with 17 March 1782 of the Christian era, by the said maharaja and Mr. David Anderson, a copy hereof shall be sent by each of the above named persons to their respective principals at Fort William and Poona and, when both copies being returned, the one under the seal of the Hon'ble the East India Company and signature of the Hon'ble the Governor-General and Council of Fort William shall be delivered to Maharaja Madhavrav Sindia Bahadur, and the other under the seal of the Peshwa Madhavrav

Pandit Pradhan, and the signature of Balaji Pandit, Nana Phadnavis, shall be delivered to Mr. David Anderson, this treaty shall be deemed complete and ratified, and the articles herein contained shall become binding on both the contracting parties.

'In all 17 articles on the fourth of *Jemmad-ul-Akher* or fifth of *Jash Adhik*, in the *Shuklapaksh*, in the year 118. (torn)' (Written in the Marathi character of Ragubhau Divan)

'Agreed to what is above written in Persian' (Subscribed in the Marathi character of Mahadj Sindia)

Witnesses

(Sd ) James Anderson

(Sd.) David Anderson

(Sd ) W. Blaine

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER LII

### TREATY BETWEEN THE MARATHAS AND ENGLISH

#### AGAINST TIPU

'Treaty of offensive and defensive alliance between the Honourable United English East India Company, the Peshwa Savai Madhavrao Narayan Pandit Pradhan Bahadur and the Nawab Nazim Ali Khan Asaf Jah Bahadur, against Fatte Ali Khan, known by the denomination of Tipu Sultan, settled by Mr. Charles Warren Malet, on the part of the said Honourable Company, with the said Pandit Pradhan, by virtue of the powers delegated to him by the Right Honourable Charles, Earl Cornwallis, K G, Governor-General in Council, appointed by the Honourable the Court of Directors of the said Honourable Company to direct and control all their affairs in the East Indies.

#### ARTICLE I

'The friendship subsisting between the states agreeable to former treaties shall be increased by this

#### ARTICLE II

'Tipu Sultan, having engagements with the contracting parties, has, notwithstanding, acted with infidelity to them all, for which reason they have united in a league that to the utmost of their power they may punish him and deprive him of the means of disturbing the general tranquillity in future.

#### ARTICLE III

'This undertaking being resolved on, it is agreed that, on Mr Malet's announcement to Pandit Pradhan of the actual commencement of hostilities between the Honourable Company's forces and the said Tipu, and on Captain Kennaway's announcing the same to the Nawab Asaf Jah, the forces of the said Pandit Pradhan and Nawab Asaf Jah, in number not less than 25,000 but as many more and as much greater an equipment as may be, shall immediately invade the territories of the said Tipu, and reduce as much of his dominions as possible before and during the rains, and after that season the said Pandit Pradhan and the Nawab will seriously and vigorously prosecute the war with a potent army, well appointed and equipped with the requisite warlike apparatus.

#### ARTICLE IV

'The Nawab Asaf Jah being furnished with two battalions of the Honourable Company's forces, Pandit Pradhan shall have an option of being joined by equal force, on the same terms, during the present war against Tipu. The pay of the said battalions to be made good by Pandit Pradhan to the Honourable Company, in like manner as settled with the Nawab Asaf Jah.

#### ARTICLE V

'On the said two battalions joining the Maratha army, Pandit Pradhan agrees to allot 2,000 horse to remain and act in concert with them. But, in the event of

urgent service on which cavalry alone can be employed, 1,000 of the said cavalry may be detached thereon, 1,000 remaining constantly with the battalions, whose pay shall be defrayed regularly, in ready money, every month in the army or in Poona, at the option of Mr. Malet.

## ARTICLE VI

'From the time of the said battalions entering Pandit Pradhan's territories, an Agent on the part of the said Pandit Pradhan shall be ordered to attend the Commander to execute such service as may occur

## ARTICLE VII

'If the Right Honourable the Governor General should require a body of cavalry to join the English forces, Pandit Pradhan and the Nawab Asaf Jah shall furnish to the number of 10,000 to march in one month from the time of their being demanded by the shortest and safest route, with all possible expedition to the place of their destination, to act with the Company's forces, but should any service occur practicable only by cavalry, they shall execute it nor avail on the clause, 'To act with the Company's forces'. The pay of the said cavalry to be defrayed monthly by the Honourable Company, at the rate and on the conditions hereafter to be settled

## ARTICLE VIII

'If in the prosecution of the war by the three allies, the enemy should gain a superiority over either, the others shall, to the utmost of their power, exert themselves to relieve the said party and distress the enemy

## ARTICLE IX

'The three contracting powers having agreed to enter into the present war, should their arms be crowned with success in the joint prosecution of it, an equal division shall be made of the acquisition of territory, forts, and whatever each Sirkar or Government may become possessed of, from the time of each party commencing hostilities; but, should the Honourable Company's forces make any acquisitions of territory from the enemy previous to the commencement of hostilities by the other parties, those parties shall not be entitled to any share thereof. In the general partition of territory, forts, etc., due attention shall be paid to the wishes and convenience of the parties, relatively to their respective frontiers.

## ARTICLE X

'The underwritten Polygars and Zamindars being dependent on Pandit Pradhan and the Nawab Asaf Jah, it is agreed that, on their territories, forts, etc., falling into the hands of any of the allies, they shall be re-established therein, and the Nazarana that shall be fixed on that occasion shall be equally divided amongst the allies, but in future Pandit Pradhan and the Nawab Asaf Jah shall collect from them the usual Khandani and Peshkush which have been heretofore annually collected. And, should the said Polygars and Zamindars act unfaithfully towards Pandit Pradhan or the Nawab, or prove refractory, in the discharge of their Khandani and Peshkush, the said Pandit Pradhan and Nawab are to be at liberty to treat them as may be judged proper. The Chief of Savnur is to be subject to service with both Pandit Pradhan and the Nawab, and, should he fail in the usual conditions thereof, Pandit Pradhan and the Nawab will act as they think proper

## List of Polygars and Zamindars

|             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| Chittledurg | Keychungunde |
| Annagundy   | Cunnaghwarry |
| Harponelly  | Kittur       |
| Bellari     | Hannur       |
| Rodurg      |              |

he district of Abdul Hakim Khan, the Chief of Savnur.

## ARTICLE XI

'To preserve, as far as possible, consistency and concert in the conduct of this important undertaking, a Vakil from each party shall be permitted to reside in the army of the others, for the purpose of communicating to each other their respective views and circumstances, and the representations of the contracting parties to each other shall be duly attended to consistent with the circumstances and stipulations of this treaty.

## ARTICLE XII

'After this treaty is signed and sealed, it will become incumbent on the parties not to swerve from its conditions at the verbal or written instance of any person or persons whatever, or on any other pretence. And, in the event of a peace being judged expedient, it shall be made by mutual consent, no party introducing unreasonable objections, nor shall either of the parties enter into any separate negotiations with Tipu, but on the receipt of any advance or message from him, by either party, it shall be communicated to the others.

## ARTICLE XIII

'If, after the conclusion of peace with Tipu, he should molest or attack either of the contracting parties, the others shall join to punish him, the mode and conditions of effecting which shall be hereafter settled by the three contracting powers.

## ARTICLE XIV

'This treaty consisting of fourteen articles, being this day settled and concluded by Mr Malet, with the Peshwa Savai Madhavrav Narayan Pandit Pradhan Bahadur, Mr Malet has delivered to Pandit Pradhan one copy of the same, in English and Persian, signed and sealed by himself, and Pandit Pradhan has delivered to Mr. Malet another copy in Marathi and Persian executed by himself, and Mr Malet has engaged to procure and deliver to Pandit Pradhan in seventy-five days a ratified copy from the Governor, on the delivery of which the treaty executed by Mr. Malet shall be returned.'

POONA }  
1st June 1799 }

(Sd ) C. W. MALET  
President

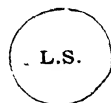


True Copy

(Sd.) C. W. MALET

Ratified by the Governor-General in Council, at Fort William in Bengal, the 5th day of July 1790.

(Sd ) CORNWALLIS  
(Sd.) CHARLES STUART  
(Sd ) PETER SPEKE



## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER LIII

LETTER FROM THE PESHWA MADHAVRAO NARAYAN TO THE  
CHHATRAPATI OF SATARA

To Shrimant Chhatrapati, the Ornament of the Kshatriya Race

'With respectful compliments from Madhavrao Narayan, doing well under the auspices of Your Majesty

'While Ghulam Kadir was in the service of the emperor at Delhi, actuated by a spirit of turbulence he made many secret plots against the emperor, and in violation of all bonds of loyalty he even went to the length of incarcerating the emperor. At this juncture in the history of the empire, Mahadji Sindia gave a strong and effective rebuff to the rebellious spirit of Ghulam Kadir and his accomplices and, restoring order in the kingdom and liberty to the emperor, reinstated him again on the throne. Thereupon the emperor, being greatly gratified, said that Mahadji Sindia had taught a better lesson to the rebel chieftain for his miscreant spirit and had restored order in the kingdom, which so many of His Majesty's servants could not do. This is a service unique in itself. In appreciation of the Pant Pradhan's services, the emperor expressed his wish to confer upon Sindia the titles of Mutalik and Mirbakshagiri. After the emperor's talk with Mahadji Sindia regarding this, he immediately passed orders to that effect, and handed over to Sindia the robe of honour, the badge of distinction and a significant reward. These Sindia has brought with him here, as we learned from him when he saw us very recently. But we solicit orders from Your Lordship in this connexion, without which we cannot invest him with the new honour. With this we respectfully subscribe'

From the *Parasnis Collection*

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER LIV

LETTER FROM MADHAVRAO NARAYAN IN THE HANDWRITING OF  
NANA PHADNAVIS TO CHHATRAPATI OF SATARA

To Shrimant Maharaj Chhatrapati, the ornament and glory of the Kshatriya Race

'With respectful compliments from Madhavrao Narayan the minister, doing well under the auspices of Your Lordship.

'We have already written in our last, that Nawab Nizam Ali Khan Bahadur has not been regularly and properly paying our claims of suzerainty, and that several of his movements and designs appear to be intended to involve the state in trouble. To meet him, proper steps have been taken, prompt measures being necessary. We sent our advice to the nawab in a formal manner and begged him to free his mind from prejudice, to pay off the outstanding dues to the state, and not to bring matters to a crisis. Notwithstanding our advice, his minister, without prudence or forethought, instigated the nawab and with regular marches commenced an advance from Bidar with an army of fifty or sixty thousand cavalry, assisted by forty thousand disciplined troops. Being thus drawn into a situation to meet the advances of the foe, our army made its advance and by regular marches encamped itself at the Sen. Even thence, we urged the nawab to mend matters, with which injunction "his goodself" was not pleased to comply. Upon this his army crossed the Moharghat and made a halt at the river Khar. Observing these movements of the enemy, with a view to give battle, we sent to Ghodegaon a force, composed of the Huzur forces under Parashram Ramachandra and Ramachandra Hari, the contingent of Vitthal Ballal of Raghoji Bhosle Senasaheb Subha, and the army of Jivaji Ballal in the services of Daulatrao Sindia, together with the troops drilled and trained after the western model and the forces of Krishnarao Holkar and Bapuji Holkar belonging to Tukoji Holkar. These encamped themselves at a



distance of four *kos* from the Khar. A division of the nawab's army advanced to attack. Both sides exchanged fire. Thereupon the nawab crossed the Khar and advanced towards Parande, on which our army got ready and took part in the fight. Seeing this the nawab's army stopped the advance towards Parande and made a direct attack upon our forces. The battle began. The artillery fire continued till 3 o'clock in the afternoon. On this occasion the troops of the Huzur stayed the nawab's onward march and greatly distinguished themselves in hand to hand fighting with the result that the centre of nawab's army was completely routed. The maharaja's army won the day. The number of the killed and wounded in men, horses and elephants, in the nawab's army, is very large. Two or four of his prominent *sardars* are amongst the killed and wounded. Guns, drums and camels, have been captured. The rabble of his army have been plundered. Men and horses in our army received wounds and injuries. Parashram Ramachandra has received a slight sword wound. The troops of the Huzur and Messrs. Bhosle and Jivaji Ballal on behalf of Sindia and Holkar cut a good figure in the battle. After this, the nawab's army betook itself to the fort of Kharda. We chased them immediately to the spot and besieged the army. Thus circumscribed, they were unable to hold out any longer, and so made overtures of peace. His minister Mondoula managed somehow to insinuate himself into our favour and, leaving the nawab's camp, joined ours. The occasion really favoured us for the complete destruction of the nawab's army. But, in view of our long friendship with him, we decided to make a treaty with him, by which he agreed to give to us a *jaghire* of twenty lakhs, and the fort of Daulatabad, and to pay off all the outstanding arrears of the right of suzerainty. The nawab returned to Bidar by regular marches. We your humble servants returned to Poona with our army, in regular marches. We have written this for Your Majesty's information. With this we respectfully subscribe.

From the *Paras Collection*

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER LVI

### TREATY OF BASSEIN, 31 DECEMBER 1802

Treaty of perpetual and general defensive alliance between the Hon'ble English East India Company and His Highness the Peshwa Bajirao Raghunathrao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur, his children, heirs, and successors, settled by Lieutenant-Colonel Barry Close, Resident at the Court of His Highness, by virtue of the powers delegated to him by His Excellency the Most Noble Richard Marquess Wellesley, Knight of the Most Illustrious Order of St. Patrick, one of His Britannic Majesty's Most Hon'ble Privy Council, Governor-General in Council, appointed by the Hon'ble Court of Directors of the said Hon'ble Company, to direct and control all their affairs in the East Indies.

Whereas, by the blessing of God, the relations of peace and friendship have uninterruptedly subsisted, for a length of time, between the Hon'ble English East India Company and His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur, and have been confirmed at different periods by treaties of amity and union, the powers aforesaid, adverting to the complexion of the times, have determined, with a view to the preservation of peace and tranquillity, to enter into a general defensive alliance, for the complete and reciprocal protection of their respective territories, together with those of their several allies and dependants, against the unprovoked aggressions or unjust encroachments of all or any enemies whatever.

#### ARTICLE I

'The peace, union and friendship, so long subsisting between the two states, shall be promoted and increased by this treaty and shall be perpetual. The friends and enemies of either shall be the friends and enemies of both; and the contracting parties agree that all the former treaties and agreements between the two states, now in force and not contrary to the tenor of this engagement, shall be confirmed by it.

## ARTICLE II

' If any power or state whatever shall commit any act of unprovoked hostility or aggression against either of the contracting parties, or against their respective dependants or allies, and after due representation shall refuse to enter into amicable explanation, or shall deny the just satisfaction or indemnity which the contracting parties shall have required, then the contracting parties will proceed to concert and prosecute such further measures as the case shall appear to demand.

' For the more distinct explanation of the true intent and effect of this agreement, the Governor-General in Council, on behalf of the Hon'ble Company, hereby declares that the British Government will never permit any power or state whatever to commit with impunity any act of unprovoked hostility or aggression against the rights and territories of His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur, but will at all times maintain and defend the same in the same manner as the rights and territories of the Hon'ble Company are now maintained and defended.

## ARTICLE III

' With a view to fulfil this treaty of general defence and protection, His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur agrees to receive, and the Hon'ble East India Company to furnish, a permanent subsidiary force of not less than six thousand regular Native Infantry, with the usual proportion of field-pieces and European artillerymen attached, and with the proper equipment of warlike stores and ammunition, which force is to be accordingly stationed, in perpetuity, in His said Highness's territories.

## ARTICLE IV

' For the regular payment of the whole expense of the said subsidiary force, His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur hereby assigns and cedes, in perpetuity, to the Hon'ble East India Company, all the territories detailed in the schedule annexed to this treaty.

## ARTICLE V

' As it may be found that certain of the territories ceded by the foregoing article to the Hon'ble Company may be inconvenient from their situation, His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur, for the purpose of rendering the boundary line of the Hon'ble Company's possession a good and well-defended one, agrees that such exchanges of *talukas* or lands shall be made thereafter, on terms of a fair valuation of their respective revenues, as the completion of the said purpose may require. And it is agreed and covenanted that the territories to be assigned and ceded to the Hon'ble Company by Article IV, or in consequence of the exchange stipulated eventually in this article, shall be subject to the exclusive management and authority of the said Company and of their officers.

## ARTICLE VI

' Notwithstanding the total annual expense of the subsidiary force is estimated at twenty-five lakhs of rupees, His said Highness hath agreed to cede, by Article IV, lands estimated to yield annually the sum of twenty-six lakhs of rupees, the additional lakh being intended to meet possible deficiencies in the revenues of the said lands, and save the Hon'ble Company from loss.

## ARTICLE VII

' After the conclusion of this treaty, and as soon as the British Resident shall signify to His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur, that the Hon'ble Company's officers are prepared to take charge of the districts ceded by Article IV, His Highness will immediately issue the necessary *parwanas* or orders to his officers, to deliver over charge of the same to the officers of the Hon'ble Company. And it is hereby agreed and stipulated, that all collections made by His Highness's

officers subsequently to the date of this treaty, and before the officers of the Hon'ble Company shall have taken charge of the said districts, shall be carried to the credit of the Hon'ble Company, and all claims to balances from the said districts, referring to periods antecedent to the conclusion of this treaty, shall be considered as null and void

#### ARTICLE VIII

' All forts situated within the districts to be ceded as aforesaid shall be delivered to the officers of the Hon'ble Company with the said districts ; and His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur engages that the said forts shall be delivered to the Hon'ble Company without being injured or damaged, and with their equipment of ordnance, stores and provisions

#### ARTICLE IX

' Grain and all other articles of consumption and provisions, and all sorts of materials for wearing apparel, together with the necessary numbers of cattle, horses and camels, required for the use of the subsidiary force, shall be entirely exempted from duties, and the commanding officer and officers of the said subsidiary force shall be treated in all respects in a manner suitable to the dignity and greatness of both states. The subsidiary force will at all times be ready to execute services of importance, such as the protection of the person of His Highness, his heirs and successors, the overawing and chastisement of rebels or excitors of disturbance in His Highness's dominions, and the due correction of his subjects or dependants who may withhold the payment of the *Sarkar's* just claims, but it is not to be employed on trifling occasions, nor like *Sabandis* to be stationed in the country to collect the revenues, nor against any of the principal branches of the Maratha empire, nor in levying contributions, from Maratha dependants in the manner of *mulukgiri* (revenue collection by armed force)

#### ARTICLE X

' Whereas much inconvenience has arisen from certain claims and demands of the Maratha state affecting the city of Surat, it is agreed that a just calculation shall be made of the value of the said claims by His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur and the Government of Bombay ; and in consequence of the intimate friendship now established between the contracting parties, His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur agrees, for himself, his heirs and successors, to relinquish, for ever, all the rights, claims and privileges of the Maratha state affecting the said city of Surat, and all collections on that account shall cease and determine from the day on which this treaty shall be concluded, in consideration of which act of friendship the Hon'ble East India Company agrees that a piece of land, yielding a sum equal to the estimated value of the said claims of the Maratha state, shall be deducted from the ceded districts by Article IV, and on the same principle, and from similar considerations, His Highness further agrees, that the amount of the collections made for the Poona state, under the title of *nagabandi*, in the *parganas* of Chhorasi and Chickli, shall be ascertained by an average taken from the receipts for a certain number of years, or by such other mode of calculation as may be determined on, and His said Highness doth further agree, for himself, his heirs and successors, to relinquish, for ever, the *nagabandi* collections aforesaid, and they shall accordingly cease from the conclusion of this treaty. And it is agreed and stipulated, that a piece of land, yielding a sum equal to the amount of the said *nagabandi* collections, shall be deducted from the districts ceded by Article IV, in the same manner as stipulated in regard to the *chauth* of Surat.

#### ARTICLE XI

' Whereas it has been usual for His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur to enlist and retain in his service Europeans of different countries, His said Highness hereby agrees and stipulates, that in the event of war breaking out between

the English and any European nation, and of discovery being made that any European or Europeans in his service, belonging to such nation at war with the English, shall have meditated injury towards the English, or have entered into intrigues hostile to their interest, such European or Europeans, so offending, shall be discharged by His said Highness and not suffered to reside in his dominions.

## ARTICLE XII

' Inasmuch as, by the present treaty, the contracting parties are bound in a general defensive alliance, for mutual defence and protection against all enemies, His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur consequently engages never to commit any act of personal hostility and aggression against His Highness the Nawab Asoph Jah Bahadur, or any of the Hon'ble Company's allies or dependants, or against any of the principal branches of the Maratha empire or against any power whatever, and in the event of differences arising, whatever adjustment the Company's Government, weighing matters in the scale of truth and justice, may determine, shall meet with full approbation and acquiescence.

## ARTICLE XIII

' And whereas certain differences, referring to past transactions, are known to subsist between the *Sarkar* of His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur and the *Sarkar* of His Highness the Nawab Asoph Jah Bahadur, and whereas an amicable adjustment of those differences must be highly desirable for the welfare and benefit of both the said *Sarkars*, His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur, with a view to the above end, agrees and accordingly binds himself, his heirs and successors, to fulfil and conform to the stipulation of the treaty of Mahad, and His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur further agrees, that on the basis of the fulfilment of the said treaty of Mahad, and of the claims of His Highness the Nawab Asoph Jah Bahadur to be totally exempted from the payment of *chauth*, the Hon'ble Company's Government shall be entitled to arbitrate and determine all such points, as may be in doubt or difference between the *Sarkars* of their Highnesses aforementioned, and His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur further agrees, that in the event of any differences arising between his Government and that of His Highness the Nawab Asoph Jah Bahadur, at any future period, the particulars of such differences shall be communicated to the Hon'ble East India Company, before any act of hostility shall be committed on either side, and the said Hon'ble Company, interposing their mediation, in a way suitable to rectitude, friendship and union, and mindful of justice and established usage, shall apply themselves to the adjustment of all such differences, conformable to propriety and truth, and shall bring the parties to a right understanding. And it is further agreed, that whatever adjustment of any such differences the Company's Government, weighing things in the scale of truth and justice, shall determine, that determination shall, without hesitation or objection, meet with the full approbation and acquiescence of both parties. It is however agreed, that this stipulation shall not prevent any amicable negotiation which the Hon'ble Company and the Courts of Poona and Hyderabad, respectively, may be desirous of opening, provided no such negotiation shall be carried on between any of the three parties without full communication thereof to each other.

## ARTICLE XIV

' Whereas a treaty of friendship and alliance has been concluded between the Hon'ble Company and the Raja Anandrao Gaikwad Bahadur, and whereas the said treaty was meditated and executed, without any intention that it should infringe any of the just rights or claims of His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur affecting the *Sarkars* of the said Raja, His said Highness advertising thereto, and also to the intimate alliance now established between the contracting parties, do hereby formally acknowledge the existence of the said treaty between the Hon'ble Company and Raja Anandrao Gaikwad Bahadur, and inasmuch as, by reason of certain unfinished transactions, the conclusion of which has been

suspended from time to time, various demands and papers of accounts are found to subsist between the Government of His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur and the *Sarkar* of the Raja aforementioned, His said Highness, placing full reliance on the impartiality, truth, and justice of the British Government, doth hereby agree that the said Government shall examine into and finally adjust the said demands and papers of accounts, and His said Highness further stipulates and binds himself, his heirs and successors, to abide by such adjustment as the British Government shall accordingly determine.

#### ARTICLE XV

'The contracting parties will employ all practical means of conciliation to prevent the calamity of war, and for that purpose will, at all times, be ready to enter into amicable explanations with other states, and to cultivate and improve the general relations of peace and amity with all the powers of India, according to the true spirit and tenor of this defensive treaty. But if a war should unfortunately break out between the contracting parties and any other power whatever, then His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur engages, that with the reserve of two battalions of sepoys, which are to remain near His Highness's person, the residue of the British subsidiary force, consisting of four battalions of sepoys with their artillery, joined by six thousand infantry and ten thousand horse of His Highness's own troops, and making together an army of ten thousand infantry and ten thousand cavalry, with the requisite train of artillery, and warlike stores of every kind, shall be immediately put in motion, for the purpose of opposing the enemy, and His Highness likewise engages to employ every further effort in his power, for the purpose of bringing into the field, as speedily as possible, the whole force which he may be able to supply from his dominions, with a view to the effectual prosecution and speedy termination of the said war. The Hon'ble Company in the same manner engage on their parts, in this case, to employ in active operations against the enemy the largest force which they may be able to furnish over and above the said subsidiary force.

#### ARTICLE XVI

'Whenever war shall appear probable, His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur engages to collect as many *brinjars*<sup>1</sup> as possible, and to store as much grain as may be practicable in his frontier garrisons

#### ARTICLE XVII

As by the present treaty the union and friendship of the two states is so firmly cemented that they may be considered as one and the same, His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur engages neither to commence nor to pursue, in future, any negotiations with any other Power whatever, without giving previous notice and entering into mutual consultation with the Hon'ble East India Company's Government, and the Hon'ble Company's Government, on their part, hereby declare that they have no manner of concern with any of His Highness's children, relations, subjects, or servants, with respect to whom His Highness is absolute.

#### ARTICLE XVIII

'Inasmuch as, by the present treaty of general defensive alliance, the ties of union are with the blessing of God, so closely drawn, that the interests of the two states are become identified, it is further mutually agreed, that if disturbances shall at any time break out in the districts ceded to the Hon'ble Company by this agreement, His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur shall permit such a proportion of the subsidiary troops as may be requisite to be employed in quelling the same within the said districts. If disturbances shall, at any time, break out in any part of His Highness's dominions contiguous to the Company's frontier,

<sup>1</sup> A caste specially skilled in army transport.

to which it might be inconvenient to detach any proportion of the subsidiary force, the British Government, in like manner, if required by His Highness Rao Pandit Pradhan Bahadur, shall direct such proportion of the troops of the Company as may be most conveniently stationed for the purpose, to assist in quelling the said disturbances within His Highness's dominions.

## ARTICLE XIX

'It is finally declared that this treaty which, according to the foregoing articles, is meant for the support and credit of His said Highness's Government, and to preserve it from loss and decline, shall last as long as the sun and moon shall endure'

(Signed, sealed and exchanged at Bassein, December 1802, or the 5th of Ramzan, Hijri 1217.)

(Sd.) B. Close

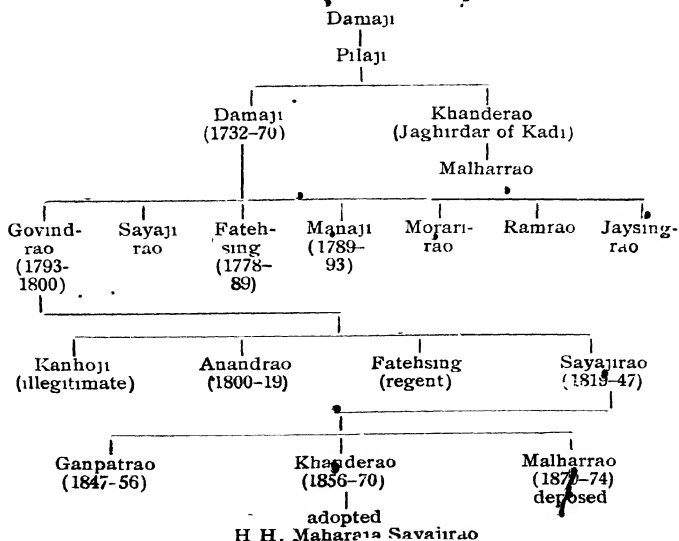
*Resident at Poona*

The Seal of Pradhan

The Peshwa's signature

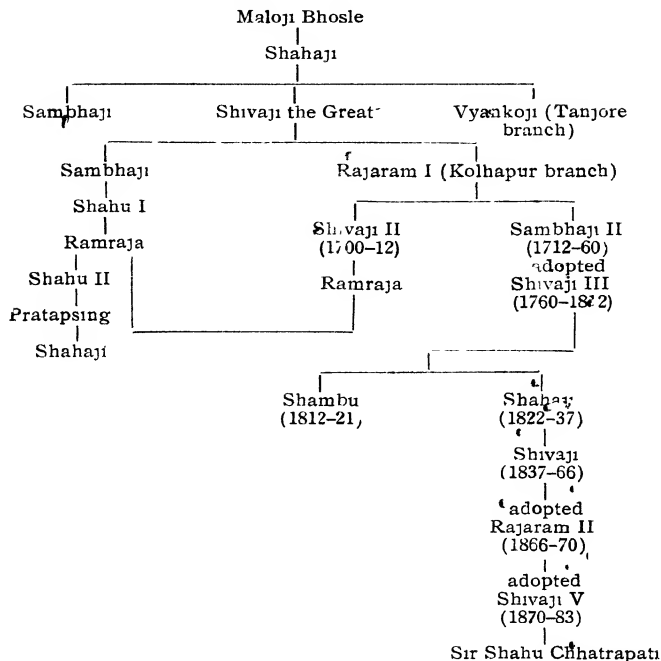
## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER LVII

## GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THE GAIKIVADS OF BARODA



## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER LVIII

## BHOSLE'S FAMILY TREE

NOTE ON RAM SHASTRI AND JUSTICE  
UNDER THE PESHWAS

(By Rao Bahadur D. B. Parasnis)

Before the conquest of the Deccan by the Marathas there were no regular courts of justice except the village council or *panchayat*, which was the most ancient and time-honoured institution in the country and worked well against injustice and oppression in every village. This was the only institution that survived revolutions and disturbances in the country, and lived through all the changes that had taken place since the downfall of the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar. It was based on sound principles of law and agreeable to the religion, habits and customs of the people. An English authority has aptly remarked that the *panchayat* system resembled the English jury system, which survived in England notwithstanding all the violent efforts of the Norman conquerors to supersede it by substituting for it trial by battle. The Mohammedan rulers of the Deccan seem to have interfered little with the administration of

justice beyond shifting the seats of government. Their laws and regulations, founded on the Koran, referred mainly to their own class. The village council or *panchayat* continued in force, except that the names of the village and district officers were changed to *patil* and *deshmukh* respectively. Shivaji established his rule in Maharashtra about the middle of the 17th century and, though he hardly found the time to improve the administration, he created the post of *Nyayadhish* or Chief Justice in 1661, and bestowed it on Niraji Raoji. The *Nyayadhish* was a member of his *Ashta Pradhan* or Council of Eight, and the office was continued till the death of Raja Shahu in 1749. His Prime Minister, or Peshwa, Balaji Bajirao, introduced several changes in the administration at Poona and established a separate department for justice and law, and appointed Balkrishna Shastri Gadgil as *Nyayadhish* or Chief Judge. But the real reform in the judicial department was introduced in the time of Madhavrao I, who appointed the celebrated Ram Shastri as Chief Justice of Poona and gave him a separate establishment and full authority to frame laws and regulations for the better administration of justice.

Ram Shastri, surnamed Prabhane, was a Deshastha Brahmin and hailed from Mahuli, a village on the river Kistna near Satara. It is said that he served first as a *shagirda*, or personal attendant, to the Peshwa Balaji Bajirao, but owing to a sharp rebuke from the Peshwa he left his service and went to study at Benares, the chief seat of Sanskrit learning. There he spent a few years, and returned to Poona a well versed and learned *shastri*. The Peshwa Balaji, pleased with his high spirit and superior talents, appointed him as one of his *shastris* in 1751, on a pay of Rs. 40 per month and half a *dakshina* or religious gift of Rs. 500 during the month of *Shrawan*, and a dress of honour worth Rs. 551. Two years later he was favoured with the gift of a horse, for which he received a monthly allowance of Rs. 15. After the death of Balkrishna Shastri in 1759, he was selected as *Nyayadhish*, Chief Justice and was given the distinction of a palankeen, which brought with it an allowance of Rs. 1,000 a year. Ram Shastri earned a great reputation for his learning, character and virtues in the reign of Madhavrao I, who treated him with great respect and honour. Ram Shastri took special pains to instruct the Peshwa in law as well as in general administration.

The following anecdote of Ram Shastri is most instructive and throws light on the admirable character of both the Peshwa Madhavrao and the learned Ram Shastri. Madhavrao was once so much influenced by the erudite and religious discourses of some learned Brahmins that for a time he began to perform the various rites and occupy himself with the meditation that the *Shastras* strictly enjoin upon devotees. Ram Shastri saw that this would come in the way of his duties as a Peshwa; but he saw also the futility of dissuading the Peshwa by arguments which might perhaps make a man of Madhavrao's character more firm in his resolution. One day Ram Shastri happened to go to the palace to attend upon the Peshwa when the latter was engaged in meditation, and the Shastri had to return. The next day the Shastri went to the Peshwa and formally resigned his office, expressing his desire to retire to Benares to lead the spiritual life enjoined by the *Shastras*. Madhavrao immediately apologized for the apparent impropriety of his conduct the day before, but excused himself by saying that he was engaged in meditations, as every Brahmin ought to be. Ram Shastri replied that only those Brahmins who renounced all worldly advantages could afford to spend long hours in thought. Those Brahmins who had not discarded the material world for the spiritual but had assumed the duties of kings should devote their time more to the good of their subjects. That was the only way to justify their changed lives. "Your duty," said Ram Shastri, "is to attend first to the welfare of your people, but, if you prefer your duties as a Brahmin to those of a king, resign your throne and come with me and pass your life as strictly as the *Shastras* enjoin a Brahmin to do." Madhavrao, fair-minded as he was, recognized the justice of the rebuke and gave up his religious exercises.

Soon after the death of Madhavrao I, Ram Shastri's sterling qualities as a judge were put to the test when the Peshwa Narayanrao was murdered in 1774. It was generally suspected that Raghunathrao was privy to the murder; and he asked Ram Shastri what was the penalty for the act. Ram Shastri not only declared that capital punishment was the only penalty for this offence, but declined



to serve any longer under a Peshwa who had murdered his own nephew. He left Poona to lead a retired life at Parildav Wadi near Wai. Later on, in 1777, Nana Phadnavis induced Ram Shastri to return to Poona to resume his work as *Nyayadhish*, with an annual salary of Rs. 2,000 and an allowance of Rs. 1,000 for his palankeen.

Mountstuart Elphinstone has given an elaborate account of the judicial system of the Peshwas, particularly the proceedings before Ram Shastri, in his *Report on the territories conquered from the Peshwa*. Another authority, Dr. Coates, who was Residency Surgeon in Poona, contributed in 1819 some valuable notes on the administration of justice in Poona to the Literary Society of Bombay. He wrote:

"A sort of ecclesiastical court and one for the administration of criminal justice were acknowledged in the city. A learned *shastri*, assisted by other *shastris* supposed to be acquainted with Hindu Law, was at the head of the first. It took cognizance of all offences against the ordinances of religion, and breaches of rules of caste. It was also referred to for judgment in intricate criminal and civil cases, particularly when Brahmans were the parties concerned. Disputes, etc., in castes, were permitted to be settled by their own bodies; appeals, however, were always open to the *shastris*, and, it is said, were encouraged.

"The criminal court was composed of a Brahmin president, some Brahmin clerks, and a *shastri*. Its mode of proceeding, if the accused were professed thieves or old offenders, was summary, and had something of a sanguinary character. It was always essential to conviction that the offender should confess his guilt, and the investigation turned much on this. The facts and evidence were all taken down in writing by *karkuns* (clerks), and persuasion and threats were used from time to time to obtain confession. If this failed, and when from the evidence recorded there appeared little doubt of the fault of the accused, torture was employed and he was flogged; the chilli bag was put to his nose, etc. If he persevered in his declaration of innocence, he was sent back to prison, put in the stocks, and allowed only a very scanty subsistence, and after an interval was brought forward again and again to try to get him to confess. This refers chiefly to Ramoosis, Mangs, and persons of bad character. In other cases the proceedings were conducted with more deliberation and forbearance, and there were probably few instances where those entirely innocent were made to suffer. Persons accused of robbery and theft were readily admitted to bail, if the bondsman made himself responsible for the lost property in cases of conviction. Murder was not bailable, unless a compromise was made with the friends of the deceased. The accused might summon what evidence they pleased, but were not allowed to have any intercourse with them. When the offender had been convicted on his own confession, the president, the *shastri*, and the Brahmans of the court, in ordinary cases, awarded the sentence, and in intricate cases this was done by a body of learned *shastris*, sometimes in the presence of the Peshwa. No severe punishment was inflicted till the case had been submitted to the Peshwa for his approval. Brahmans, of course, whatever their crimes, were never put to death, or subjected to any punishment considered ignominious. For small crimes they were often merely reproved, ordered to dispense charities, and perform religious penances; or were subjected to slight fines, imprisonment, or flogging, for those of a deeper dye they were heavily fined, or confined in hill forts, sometimes in irons, where the climate and their scanty and unwholesome food commonly soon put an end to them, and their property was sequestered, and their sins visited on the children. Gangs committing murder, highway robbery, and house-breaking, were punished by death, and their bodies hung up on the sides of roads, other professed incorrigible thieves were punished, according to the extent of their crimes, by the cutting off of a finger, or hand, or foot, or both, and left to their fate. Perjury was punished by the perjurer being made to make good the loss that depended on his false oath, and paying a fine to Government. Forgery, by the Hindu Law, ought to have been punished by the cutting off of the right hand, but thus, like almost every crime at Poona, was commutable for money. Women were never punished by death for any crime. Turning them out of their castes, parading them on an ass with their heads shaved, cutting off their noses, etc., were the usual punishments.

" Civil causes when men of rank were the suitors, or which involved much property, were generally referred to the ministers, and submitted to their arbitration, or tried by *panchayat*. Small crimes and disputes in the villages were within the jurisdiction of the *patel*, who punished the former by reproof or stripes, but was not permitted to levy fines. The latter were settled on his authority, or, if the parties demanded it, by *panchayat*. Disputes of greater importance, if the parties belonged to different villages, were referred to the revenue officer, who again settled them on his authority, or by a *panchayat* constituted of members from the neighbouring villages. The *shets* and *mahajans*, and the civil officers of trading towns, were supposed to have the same authority within their divisions as the *patels* had in the villages but their power had been curtailed. *Sardars* and men of rank, besides administering justice to their immediate servants and dependants, were often called on by their neighbours, and many disputes were equitably adjusted in this way.

" Together with these different chances that the people had of getting justice, custom in many instances allowed them to take the law into their own hands. This was especially the case in the recovery of debts. Debtors were seldom submitted to imprisonment, but the modes of annoyance resorted to by the creditor were perhaps more effectual in bringing them to a speedy settlement.

" Causes that could not be satisfactorily settled simply by the authority they were referred to were tried by *panchayat*. A *panchayat* assumes in the eye of Hindu Law a sacred character, whence it is termed also *panch parmeswar*, or the god of five persons. No oath is administered to the members of a *panchayat*, but, before proceeding to try a case, they are reminded of the sacredness of the character they have to maintain, and the punishment that awaits them in the next world should they violate it by acting contrary to their consciences. A *panchayat* may consist of from two to twelve members or more, but four is the usual number. It is optional with the disputants to nominate the members themselves, or to leave this to the Government, but even in the latter case they had the right of challenge. These public calls, however, seem seldom to have been considered a hardship custom had rendered them familiar, and the selection was thought a mark of distinction. The trial by *panchayat* was pretty uniform, and went in a great measure on the principle of deciding on the case as represented by the parties themselves.

" The *panchayats*," writes Elphinstone, " were more frequently named by the parties than the judge, but Ram Shastri and his deputies seem frequently to have presided at the trial, the *panchayat* performing nearly the same functions as a jury in England. A good deal of the investigation seems to have been entrusted to Ram Shastri's *karkuns*, who reported to him and the *panchayat*, and in the decree the names of the members of the *panchayat* are not mentioned, even when it is merely a repetition of their award. The decision was always in the Peshwa's name, and in all cases of magnitude required his signature, all cases relating to land were of this description, and the same holds good all over the country where claims to land are considered more immediately under the superintendence of Government. It was not unusual in the country as well as in Poona for a Government officer to receive the complaint and answer, with the documents and the written evidence of witnesses, and lay the whole in this shape before the *panchayat*, who could call for more evidence if they required it. Much time must have been saved by this arrangement, but it gave the officer of Government considerable opportunities of imposing on the *panchayat*. The members of the *panchayat* received no fee, but when they had much trouble the winner of the suit made them openly a present for their pains.

" A sum of money was likewise levied for the Government from the winner, under the name of *karkis*, which means congratulatory offering, and from the loser under the name of *gunhegari*, or fine. These *gunhegars* varied with the means of litigants, but from the revenue accounts I observe that one-fourth of the property is always put down as the price paid for justice by the plaintiff when he wins his cause. The plaintiff losing his cause was obliged to pay the expenses of the defendant, if the latter were poor."

" Such was the judicial system that prevailed in Poona and in the country at the time of the Peshwas and, though there was no regular procedure, it is said to

have worked very well in those days ; and there were far less acts of injustice and violence under this irregular system than one might suppose. The reason for this, according to Dr. Coates, "is chiefly to be looked for in the mildness and abhorrence of cruelty in the dispositions of the people produced by many of their religious maxims." In Poona the system distributed equal justice under the able judge Ram Shastri, who after his return in 1777 held the post of the *Nyayadhis* till his death in the year 1789. The Government of the Peshwas appreciated the services of this eminent judge in various ways, and lastly, as a mark of respect to his memory, gave a donation of Rs. 2,000 towards his funeral expenses.

' Ram Shastri left behind him a son named Gopal Shastri, who used to get Rs. 3,200 as an annual grant from the Peshwa's Government. His descendants are still living at Mahuli, and are well known for their Vedic learning.

' There are many stories still current about Ram Shastri's skill as a judge, his fearless independence, and his upright character, his extreme truthfulness and his sound knowledge. Such a noble character as his was bound to make a mark and few people equalled Ram Shastri in the influence he wielded over the public and the respect he received from all. For weight and soundness his opinions were universally admired and his learned judgments in the *panchayat* were considered precedents for future guidance. Grant Duff has paid a glowing tribute to Ram Shastri's work, and the estimate which the great historian has formed of the man shows how much of the good in the administration of the Peshwas was due to Ram Shastri. "The first person," writes Grant Duff, "who held this situation of *Nyayadhis* was Ram Shastri. He was, I believe, appointed by Madhavarao I, whose character as an upright judge stands higher than that of any other Peshwa. But even after the death of his patron, Ram Shastri continued to uphold the duties of this situation with becoming dignity and high honour, his memory is revered throughout the country, and many of the good acts of Nana Phadnavis are believed to have originated in the weight and respectability of Ram Shastri's opinions. Such a public character under a corrupt Government is beyond all praise, and a succession of such examples, even if they had stood alone in their generation, would have prevented the general debasement of morals which Bajirao and his court effected so rapidly in Poona."

' On the death of Ram Shastri, his right-hand man, Ayya Shastri, who was equally learned and upright but rather weak, was appointed *Nyayadhis* in his place. He conducted the duties until, growing disgusted with Bajirao's interference in the judicial administration, he ran away from Poona and then, became a *sannyasi*. Bal Shastri Tokekai was nominated to the office, but, owing to the inferior state of the administration, the system, which till then with all its defects had proved successful, lost its prestige and importance.

"The late Peshwa," writes Grant Duff, "had a better opportunity than any of his predecessors of amending laws or of fixing whatever was considered equitable by the generality of his subjects, but the prince possessed neither ability nor inclination for a task of the kind. During the last twenty years, matters in this respect were probably worse than at any former period. Bajirao raised mean men for disgraceful acts, and ruined respectable persons who had any value for their own and the fair reputation of their families. Decisions, therefore, in most cases depended on the will of unprincipled individuals, who cared little for public opinion and who had few restraints either upon their caprice or their avarice. Bajirao listened to no complaints, much less redressed them. Every rich man in office, however insignificant his place, assembled *panchayats* and decided civil suits. These decisions, however, were often reversed, or new *panchayats* ordered at the pleasure of any greater man. The *Nyayadhis* (Bal Shastri) did not interfere with the *panchayat* convened by any powerful man, lest a superior influence to his own should occasion the loss of his situation. The duties of the office called *Nyayadhis* were latterly exercised in Poona by a *Shastri* who was appointed by Bajirao with a considerable establishment. This establishment cost the Government nothing, there was no salary and the whole was supported by enrolment neither authorized nor forbidden. To remark what Bajirao was so superfluous, but the course of events affords a useful lesson, and I cannot help thinking that, had Bajirao been a better prince, he would have never dared to commit in any case acts which impunity in smaller crimes led him to perpetrate."

LETTER, DATED 2 SEPTEMBER 1799, GIVING THE NEWS OF THE  
DEATH OF PARASHRAMBHAU PATWARDHAN

To Shrimant Rajeshri Dhanisaheb  
From Bhaskar Rao  
[After compliments]

'The news from this side is as follows The Maharaja of Kolhapur with his army crossing the Vedaganga, encamped near Hamadwada, while Shrimant Bhausaheb arrived near Pattan Kudi with his infantry and artillery There was a distance of five or six miles between the two camps, and every day there was reconnoitring On Tuesday, the 4th of *Bhadrapad* dark fortnight (18 September 1792) the Maharaja of Kolhapur attacked that place Bhausaheb was prepared to face the enemy Shrimant Ramchandrapant Appa, the eldest son of Bhausaheb, made an assault on the enemy In the beginning a bombardment of guns took place, after which there was a hand-to-hand fight with swords Ramchandrapant Appa showed the utmost bravery More than once the attacks of the Kolhapur army were repulsed and they had to retreat. A bullet, passing through the right arm of Ramchandrapant Appa, wounded him. The fortune of battle took a sudden unfavourable turn. Shrimant Bhausaheb received severe wounds and departed from this world, while performing his duties in the cause of his master Divine dispensations could not be avoided'

From the *Parasnis Collection*



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